



NAVY NEWS

September 2016



School of Rock



● A Merlin Mk3 from 846 NAS swoops over Royal Navy fast patrol boat HMS Scimitar off Gibraltar. Two of the Junglie aircraft deployed to the Rock for Exercise Barbary Commando (see pages 2-3)

Picture: PO(Phot) Si Ethell, CHF

Beach masters

Marines tested in Vikings

First Knight

Ship starts disaster-relief duties



Junglies go



HELLO, they're back again... if only monkeys could talk we would really know what he's thinking.

One of Gibraltar's famous Barbary apes keeps a watchful eye on a Merlin Mk3 as one of Commando Helicopter Force's squadrons returns to the Rock.

Personnel from 846 NAS were in Gibraltar in January this year but you can never make too many trips to the Med. So they returned to the British Overseas Territory on the southern end of the Iberian Peninsula to enjoy some subtropical summer weather.

Most of the Rock's upper area is covered by a nature reserve, home to around 230 Barbary macaques, known as the famous apes of Gib.

These are the only wild apes or monkeys found in Europe and are red-listed as their population declines.

But there was no monkeying around for the flying arm of the Royal Marines during

Exercise Barbary Commando 16, the aim of which was to train students from the Operational Conversion Flight.

Two of the Royal Navy green helicopters left their base at RNAS Yeovilton for the day-long journey to the Rock, via France, Spain and Portugal.

"This has been yet another first for the Commando Merlin," said Detachment Commander Lt Cdr Alex Hampson.

"We have proved the utility of range and speed available with Merlin by deploying at short notice to an airfield over 1,400 flying miles away with just two stops for fuel in a single day."

While on the Rock, the Junglie squadron also teamed up with the Gibraltar Boat Squadron for some winching training.

HMS Scimitar, her sister Sabre and three Pacific Rigid Inflatable Boats are crewed by 26 regular Royal Navy, Royal Marine and

Royal Naval Reserve personnel. Together they make up the Royal Navy Gibraltar Squadron, tasked with protecting the seas surrounding Gibraltar and supporting exercises and operations in the area.

Commanding Officer of Scimitar Lt James Bradshaw said: "Gibraltar Squadron regularly assist with the training of other units as they pass through Gibraltar's waters, such as the arrival on the Rock of 846 Squadron.

"We may be required at short notice to operate with helicopters and this exercise has proved invaluable, ensuring that we would be ready to do so."

Lt Cdr Hampson added: "We have been winch transfer training with the Gibraltar Patrol Boat Squadron to collectively increase our joint capabilities.

"These opportunities don't present



ape

themselves very often, it was a pleasure to operate with these RN vessels whilst hopefully assisting their mission."

846's aircrew and engineers only spent a few days in Gibraltar before completing the flight back to Somerset.

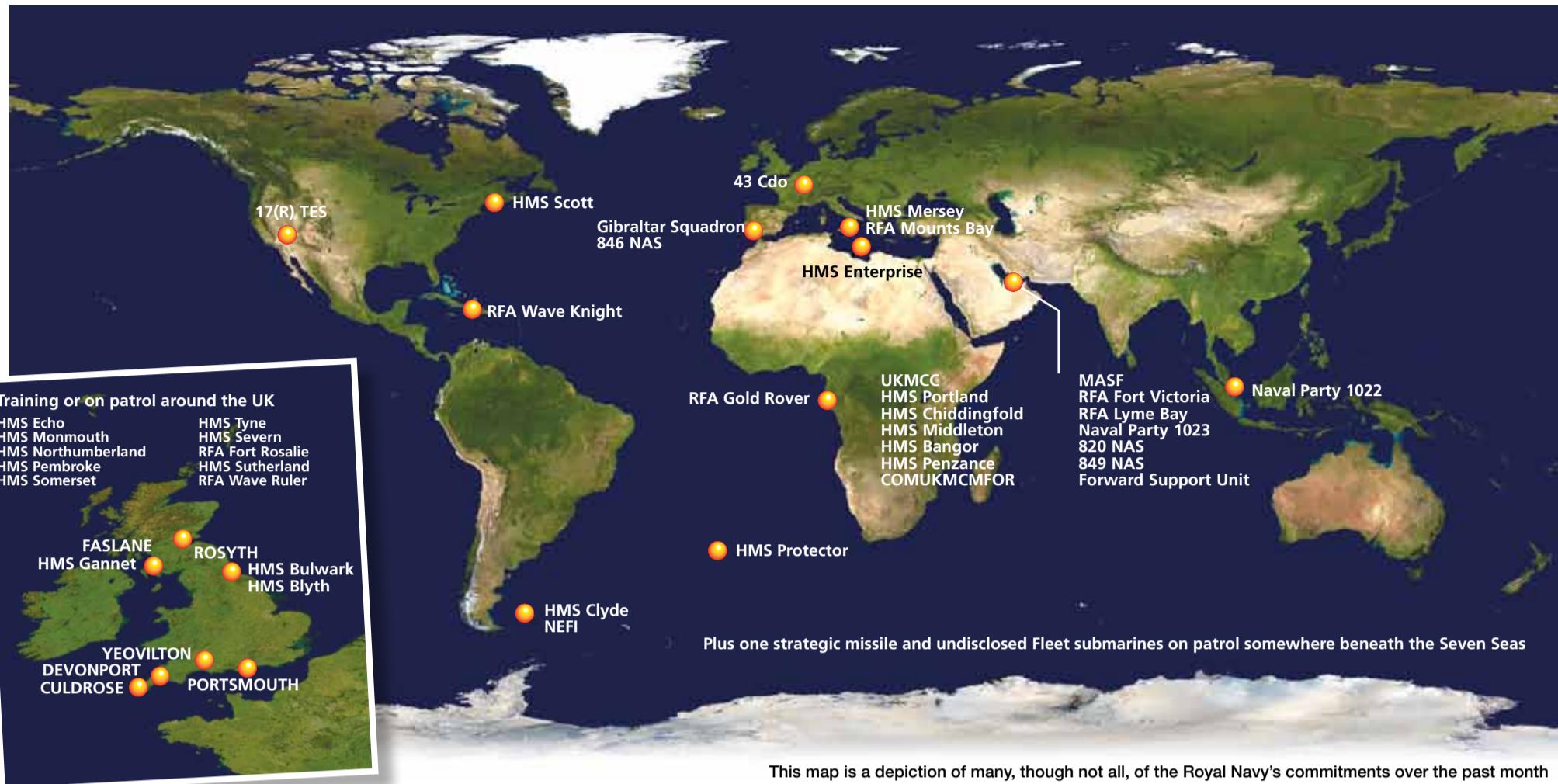
Mainly crewed by students, the continental flights served as one of the final elements needed to become qualified Commando Merlin pilots and aircrew.

Instructor Lt Jon Moore said: "This route is absolutely perfect – it gives the students two sea transits, multiple countries and a fair distance to comprehend in the lead-up planning and the flying."

Newly-appointed Commanding Officer of 846 NAS Lt Col Will Penkman said: "Exercise Barbary Commando 16 has yet again proven the ability of Commando Merlin to deploy at range, with aircrew and engineers keen to support the contingent capability which continues to evolve within CHF."

Pictures: PO(Phot) Si Ethell, CHF





Plus one strategic missile and undisclosed Fleet submarines on patrol somewhere beneath the Seven Seas

This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month



FLEET FOCUS

Protecting our nation's interests

ROYAL Marines dominate this month's edition of *Navy News*, starting with the **Viking Squadron** (see centre pages) who have been putting new drivers and commanders through their paces in Devon and Wiltshire.

Two squadrons – O and R – from **43 Commando** have also been out and about (see page 9), with troops from O heading to Germany for Exercise Deutsche Dagger while those from R hosted their USMC counterparts for Exercise Tartan Eagle in Scotland and Northumbria.

Royal Marines from **43 Cdo** also hosted the Glasgow Warriors rugby team (see page 11), putting them through a tough military fitness circuit at HMNB Clyde.

Commando Helicopter Force, the flying arm of the Royal Marines, were also busy this month (see pages 1, 2 and 3) with personnel from **846 NAS** taking part in Exercise Barbary Commando in Gibraltar, where they also worked with the **Boat Squadron**.

Also enjoying some warmer temperatures were the crew of **RFA Wave Knight** as their ship goes island hopping in the Caribbean at the start of the hurricane season (see page 7).

Over to the Gulf and sailors and Royal Marines from the Type 23 frigate **HMS Portland** have been honing their board-and-search skills (see page 6) at the US Coast Guard's complex in Bahrain.

Also in the Middle East are **849 NAS** and their Sea King Mk7s – the last seven Royal Navy kings of the skies (see page 13).

Their Merlin colleagues from **820** and **814** (see page 6) are marking ten years – including more than 14 months in the skies – hunting for pirates, terrorists and smugglers in the Middle East.

Two Royal Navy officers took up an invitation to watch a **mine warfare exercise** (see page 16) carried out by their Japanese counterparts in Mutsu Bay, some 400 miles north of Tokyo.

A 17-strong team from **Fleet Diving Unit 2** spent a month in the Baltic (see page 16) helping their Lithuanian counterparts deal with the latest in home-made bombs and historic explosives left over from two world wars.

Back in the UK were the crew of **HMS St Albans** (see page 5) as she returned to Portsmouth following a marathon tour of duty in the Middle East.

HMS Bulwark and **HMS Blyth** (see page 22) were among the attractions as thousands of spectators flocked to the Sunderland International Air Show.

The **Fleet Air Arm** hosted a national tribute to Capt Eric 'Winkle' Brown (see page 18) with 650 people attending a service at RNAS Yeovilton in honour of the Royal Navy's greatest aviator, who died earlier this year.

This month also marks the 40th anniversary of the loss of 12 sailors with their ship, **HMS Fifeleton** (see page 20).

Low cloud halted flying at this year's **RNAS Culdrose** air day (see page 19) but thousands of spectators still enjoyed the many attractions on the ground.

Thousands also flocked to **HMS Raleigh** (see page 17) as the Torpoint base held its annual open day.

Royal Navy climbers have been in the **Himalayas** for the first combined Armed Forces mountaineering expedition in four years (see page 16).

Finally, there was great success for Royal Navy sportsmen and women, with the **Royal Navy Gymnastics Team** (see back page) scooping medals galore at the British National Veterans' Championships at Lilleshall. Lt Peter Reed won his third Olympic gold medal in the **rowing** in Rio (see page 47), while the **Royal Navy Athletics Team** came away with 15 medals and their best ever team score at the Inter-Services (see page 46).

SPAG bowl in... ...to be put through their paces in Gib



PARACHUTISTS leapt into the warm waters around the Rock as the Navy's submarine rescue team practised jumping to the aid of a stricken boat.

The Submarine Parachute Assistance Group spent a week above and in the waters around Gibraltar as they stepped out of the back of a Hercules by day and night.

The team is at six hours' notice to move anywhere around the globe should a submarine require help.

Eleven SPAG members – seven veterans plus four new joiners – headed out to Gibraltar with an RAF Hercules and 47 Air Despatch Squadron of the Royal Logistics Corps.

The new joiners – like more experienced SPAG members all volunteers drawn from across the Royal Navy and Royal Marines – made their first jumps from 2,000 feet to become fully-qualified members of the team (in a real rescue, they are expected to leap from as low as 1,000ft).

Leaping into the ocean is about as tricky as it gets – jumpers must release the parachute at the exact moment of impact to prevent being dragged along (safety boats from the RN's Gibraltar Squadron were on hand).

Once in the water, the goal is to create a 'floating medical centre' – corralling various bright-red life rafts to form a 'village' from where any submariners popping up on the surface can receive immediate attention.

The makeshift floating village is also expected to provide hot and cold food for anyone saved and act as a communications hub.

The SPAGgers conducted more than 20 parachute jumps, either learning new skills or honing old ones in the process; though considerably more challenging, the night jumps also proved more popular – described by some participants as something straight out of a Tom Clancy novel.

"Proving our long-range capabilities and bloodied new team members made this a really successful trip," said WO Steve Thorpe, Senior Instructor, Submarine Escape Rescue and Survival.

If SPAG sounds like your cup of tea, contact WO1 Chris Dello on NAVY OP TRG-FOST N SMERAS SPAG@MOD.UK for details about joining the unit.

Wham, bam new ASRAAM in the can

NEARLY £200m is being spent stockpiling air-to-air missiles for the Navy's new stealth fighter.

The government is spending £184m with defence firm MBDA to supply the next-generation ASRAAM heat seekers – already being updated for RAF Typhoons – for the F-35B Lightning II.

The deal with MBDA will secure around 200 jobs at its sites in Bristol, Stevenage and Bolton.

ASRAAM – Advanced Short-Range Air-to-Air Missile – can take out large enemy bombers or small drones at distances of 25km (15 miles).

The order is particularly timely as the standard version of the Navy's next-generation jet has been declared ready for front-line service with the US Air Force hailing the F-35A variant (normal take-off/landing) operational.

US Air Combat Command now has one squadron of Lightning IIs – 34th Fighter, part of the 388th Fighter Wing, based in Utah – of between 12 and 24 jets to call upon for the defence of its nation.

The A variant is a standard take-off/landing model, unlike the jump jet version – the F-35B – bought by the Fleet Air Arm and RAF for operations from HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales. Otherwise, the combat systems and weaponry carried by the two versions is pretty much identical.

British personnel are currently based on both sides of the USA working to achieve initial operational capability later this decade.

Key to declaring the F-35A ready for combat was the aircraft's first air-to-air 'kill' – a drone downed off the California coast.

Test pilot Maj Raven LeClair identified the target thanks to the F-35's sensor suite – the information was displayed on his helmet mounted display – before firing an AIM-9X Sidewinder heat-seeking missile (a US counterpart of the British ASRAAM).

A few seconds later the cry "Boola boola" crackled over the airwaves as the USAF pilot confirmed his quarry had been downed.

Just for good measure a second drone – beyond the jet's visual range – was destroyed by an AMRAAM radar-guided missile.



Saints & Winners

BRIGHT, shiny things...

Two-year-old Sophia reaches for her dad's medal while mum Jodie looks on.

The reunion for the family of PO James Gaskell was one of more than 200 joyous endings to nine months of separation as frigate HMS St Albans completed a marathon tour of the Middle East.

The ship, her crew and hundreds of expectant family members were treated to a glorious summer's day in the Solent.

The Saint's double-pronged deployment saw the frigate weigh in to the struggles both against Daesh and wider terrorism and illegal activity.

She left Portsmouth on the first day of December last year. Thirty eight thousand miles and 248 days later she returned.

In between, the ship snared 320kg of cannabis with an estimated street value in the UK of £1m, joined the battle groups of the Charles de Gaulle and the USS Harry S Truman, both of which were launching air strikes against the forces of Daesh in Syria and Iraq, and rescued two Pakistani fishermen whose boat was drifting and sinking.

And just for good measure,

there was extensive training alongside other navies in the region, from Oman's regular Khunjar Hadd exercise, to the massive international mine warfare war games – the world's

largest – which extended from the Red Sea to the Gulf and Arabian Sea.

Aiding and abetting everything the 4,500-tonne warship did, her Merlin Mk2 helicopter, whose array of sensors was used to sweep swathes of ocean looking for suspicious vessels... which could then be inspected by St Albans' Royal Marines/Royal Navy boarding teams.

For many of the ship's company, the deployment was their first on operations, including AB(Sea) Kieran O'Hara.

"It's been good to put all of our training from the past year into practice for real," he said.

"The highlight for me has been working with the USS Harry S Truman carrier strike group and supporting their operations. It's been a long trip with lots of hard work, so it's really good to get home and see my family again."

His CO Cdr Richard Hutchings said he was proud of the efforts of every man and woman aboard his frigate over the past nine months.

"Together we have been tested on operations and proved ourselves repeatedly in a demanding area of the world where Britain's reputation is strong," he said.

"Our families and friends have given us superb support. It's now our chance to be reunited and show our gratitude."

■ St Albans' charity challenge, page 26



Pictures: LPhot Paul Hall, FRPU East



RN present at Cup triumph

FOUR RN vessels made sure that there was a gunmetal grey backdrop to the colourful 2016 heats of the world's most famous yacht race when it returned to Portsmouth.

HMS Kent and Severn acted as guard ships, while P2000s HMS Ranger and Blazer assisted with the huge policing/water safety effort surrounding the America's Cup World Series.

Last year's event was marred by bad weather which severely curtailed racing. Not so 2016.

Sir Ben Ainslie's Land Rover BAR team – based in Portsmouth – triumphed over the six rounds, winning half the heats and narrowly topping the leaderboard ahead of the cup's holders, Oracle Team USA.

His triumph was watched by 133,763 people who paid to enjoy the event from the ticketed areas on the Southsea waterfront – plus double that number spectating from free public areas.

As well as some thrilling racing, they also saw the Royal Marines deliver the cup on the Saturday (the third day of the event). It was brought ashore by a landing craft from 1AGRM, driven by Sgt Darran Donovan.

"This event could not be put on without the support of the Royal Navy, providing jetty space where the boats are actually stored down in the Naval dockyard, through to providing the support out on the water, the security needed to make sure this event went off without a hitch," said former Olympian turned BAR Landrover commercial manager Phil Kennard.



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Roughers

YOU didn't have to be in Blighty in late August to get lashed by a summer storm. This is the view from the bridge of survey ship HMS Scott, ploughing her way through heavy seas in the North Atlantic.

The Devonport-based scientific vessel has faced seas of up to State 7 (waves of 20-30ft) in the middle of five months on the North Atlantic run carrying out deep survey work of the ocean seabed – her suite of sensors can scan nearly 60 square miles of seabed every hour.

She typically spends her summers in the North Atlantic (when the ocean is supposed to be more clement) and winters doing similar survey work in the Mediterranean and Middle East.

When the survey ship's medical officer Surg Lt Deona Mei Lam Chan was called to the bridge, she fully expected to deal with a casualty caused by the stormy weather.

Instead, as the Devonport-based vessel's public relations officer, she was asked to get her camera out and start clicking to record the rare sight of a falcon, perched on the mast – which rises a good 50ft above the main deck of the Navy's largest survey ship.



Hi Ho! It's off to Chid we go

THUMBS (well, thumb) up from AB(Diver) Brad Hayes as he follows shipmates AB(MW)s Andy Holmes and 'Mac' McNamee up the gangway to join HMS Chiddingfold – their home for the next six or seven months.

In the latest switchover of sailors running the Royal Navy's four-strong minchunter force in Bahrain, Crew 3 are the proud 'owners' of the Cheery Chid into early 2017.

Before heading to the Gulf, the crew conducted extensive training in one of Chid's Hunt-class sister ships off the west coast of Scotland – everything from solo exercises to large-scale international war games such as the twice-yearly Joint Warrior, run from Faslane.

Temperatures in the Hebrides barely reached double figures during the spring, there was a stark contrast with the midday sun in the Gulf regularly topping 45 degrees in August (although it's only about 36°C at present...).

"My crew trained hard to ensure that they were ready to make the most out of Chiddingfold's modern mine hunting technology," said CO Lt Cdr James Baker.

"Many of my sailors have deployed to the Gulf before but for many others it is a new and exciting experience."

"Whilst deployed we will visit ports in neighbouring countries so that we can train alongside the navies of our regional partners and enjoy getting to know their countries and culture."

As the new owners, Crew 3 re-tested all of the ship's sensors and weapons to ensure that she is fully operational before beginning an autumn of exercises and patrols in company with RN, US and other coalition navies operating in the region.

■ More from the world of mine warfare, page 16

Guiding lights for carriers

A SERIES of 'light towers' will rise over Portsmouth Harbour over the next few weeks to help the Navy's new carriers into their home base.

The 14 steel structures, which will rise 30 metres from the seabed, provide a platform for the lights that will be used to precisely position HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales when they enter or leave harbour.

As the largest vessels ever built for the RN, £34m of improvements are needed

to accommodate them in Portsmouth – from improving jetties and shoreside facilities, to dredging the main channel into port and the new navigational lights.

The lights – powered by a combination of solar panels and batteries – will only be lit when the carriers are either approaching or leaving their berths.

Eight of the navigational aids, each weighing 22 tonnes, are going up in the Solent, the rest inside the harbour.

Men behind drugs haul jailed

TWO Turkish sailors have been jailed for 42 years following the largest ever haul of cocaine seized in UK waters by HMS Somerset in the spring of last year.

Their boat, the ocean-going tug MV Hamal, was intercepted by the frigate and a Border Force cutter around 100 miles from Aberdeen.

A joint RN/Border Force

boarding team went aboard and recovered over three tonnes of cocaine from a ballast tank.

The drugs were estimated to be worth more than £500m on Britain's streets.

The tug's master Mumin Sahin, 47, and his deputy Emin Ozmen, 51, were jailed for 22 and 20 years respectively following a trial at the High Court in Glasgow.

A decade of Middle Eastern Merlin magic

MERLIN fliers are celebrating ten years – including more than 14 months in the skies – hunting for pirates, terrorists and smugglers in the Middle East.

The helicopters of 820 and 814 Naval Air Squadron have spent a full decade patrolling the Arabian Sea – the longest sustained overseas mission by the Fleet Air Arm since the Balkans crisis.

The two squadrons were established originally to operate en masse from the flight deck of a Royal Navy aircraft carrier on sub-hunting duties, but their suite of sensors – particularly

in the Mk2 – are also suited to tracking surface contacts.

That led to one squadron being dispatched to the Middle East for a year at a time back in 2006 to keep an eye on maritime traffic at a time when there were growing concerns about piracy off the Horn of Africa as well as the long-standing problem of drugs being transported to the West from central Asia... with the proceeds most likely funding terrorist activities.

Flying roughly one sortie a day, the helicopters – first the Mk1 and, over the past couple of years its successor, the Mk2 – have clocked up more than 10,000 hours in Middle East skies, or

over 60 entire weeks.

It's their job to scour hundreds of square miles of ocean every mission, using the radar to scan for contacts of interest, helping Coalition warships on the surface on the lookout for suspicious vessels.

Just for good measure, the helicopters are on standby to perform search and rescue duties and evacuate casualties – be they from allied warships or merchant vessels.

A typical sortie over the Arabian Sea lasts up to four hours. Temperatures inside the Merlin regularly break the 50°C barrier in the summer – as they do for engineers toiling on the ground to keep the helicopters serviceable.

The technicians also have to contend

with local wildlife which is eager to sneak aboard the helicopters – camel spiders (evil-looking beasties which are actually closer to scorpions than spiders, but they're not venomous) and snakes especially.

Then there's the long-distance supply and support lines the ground and air crews rely on – the men, women, machines and spare parts are all based at Culdrose, home of the grey Merlin Helicopter Force.

Small wonder then that Cdr Jon Holroyd, 820's CO and the man in charge of the east-of-Suez operation on its tenth anniversary, is delighted and proud of the men and women under him who have risen to every challenge.

"I am immensely proud of the efforts my aircrew and engineers put into delivering aircraft in an expeditious and safe manner, whatever the time and whatever the weather," he said.

"The Merlin is such an adaptable helicopter and my personnel flexible in their nature, which means as a squadron we are equally as capable of working in the temperate climes of the UK or the harsh heat of the Gulf."

820 are in the process of trading places with the Flying Tigers of 814 NAS as the former squadron gets ready to be the first Fleet Air Arm formation to be assigned to new carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.



Look who's stalking

RED light fright...

Sailors and Royal Marines from HMS Portland move through a mock-up ship as they hone board-and-search skills in one of the world's best training facilities.

The US Coast Guard invited the frigate's green (RM) and blue (RN) boarding teams to make use of their impressive complex in Bahrain upon Portland's arrival in theatre after her 7,000-mile journey from Plymouth.

The 'ship in a box' complex turns shipping containers into the mock-up of a merchantman's superstructure – it stretches for 3,000 square feet over three storeys.

What takes training in it to the next level is the ability to use simulation ammunition – weapons which act like the real thing, but don't kill.

Pistols, rifles, shotguns, even claymore mines are replicated in some form – which means those undergoing training have to

wear protective kit.

Impressive as the facility is, most RN and allied drug busts have come from searches of dhows, rather than large steamers and container vessels, so the facility also features a 60ft replica of a dhow with more than 20 hidden compartments for contraband (some real-life seizures have taken 12 hours or more).

Since the complex was established back in 2009, more than 100 board-and-search teams of various nationalities have gone through it – the goal is to ensure that the numerous navies committed to maritime security east of Suez conduct their board-and-search operations in a similar, or even identical, manner.

"The training provided by the US Coast Guard has been fantastic," said boarding officer Lt Mike Underwood, 29, from Halifax.

"They have an incredible facility and it's really beneficial to share drills and

techniques. The training has been an exciting taste of what is to come and the whole team is chomping at the bit. Illegal trafficking undermines local economies and offers an easy source of funding for terrorists around the world so I'm proud to do my bit to stop them."

While he and his shipmates were sweating it out in the ship in a box, Portland's command team were being briefed on the challenging mission which lies ahead.

"We spent six months preparing for this vital and complex deployment," said her CO Capt Paul Stroud.

"Around 40 per cent of the world's trade passes through the Middle East by sea, so my ship's company are ready to operate with our allies throughout the region to promote stability, counter terrorism and ensure that legitimate maritime activity may proceed unhindered."

Picture: PO 2nd Class Sean Fur, USN

Time to hand over anti-terrorism task force reins

FIVE drug busts with more than two tonnes of narcotics seized – depriving terrorists of millions of pounds of funding – are the results of four months' command of an international task group by the Royal Navy.

It has just handed over control of Combined Task Force 150 whose warships – including HMS Portland – patrol swathes of the Indian Ocean in a bid to strangle illegal activity on the high seas.

From Bahrain, the staff under Cdre Guy Robinson have choreographed the movements of vessels from seven nations across 3.2 million square miles of open

water – nearly 15 times the size of the North Sea.

The efforts of both the staff and the ships are focused on disrupting terrorism in the Middle East region – such as stopping its fund-raising from drug smuggling and shipping arms caches around.

Extensive work was carried out by the task force staff in the Seychelles, Kenya and Tanzania – efforts which paid off with a series of busts, notably one tonne of high-grade heroin seized by HMAS Darwin and FS Nivose and one tonne of high-

grade hashish captured by HMS Defender.

Those seizures were the high points of 45 boardings conducted by task group ships over the four months of RN control.

"It has been a very satisfying period of operations, especially working within a multi-national force," said WO1 Reggie Slaughter, one of the staff's battle watch captains overseeing work in the operations room.

"We've made a significant contribution to the fight



White knights on white-hot days

COMMANDOS from RFA Wave Knight got stuck in revamping a church in the Caribbean – the first good deed of many as the tanker begins disaster relief duties in the region.

They spent 16 days revamping a ministry near Curacao in the Dutch Antilles, turning a run-down house of worship into a gleaming house of worship.

The ship recently relieved patrol vessel HMS Mersey, who focused the majority of her deployment to the region on countering drug-running and flying the flag for the UK.

With hurricane season now arrived, however, the 31,000-tonne auxiliary has the additional responsibility of helping island communities hit by natural disaster; she even has a specialist humanitarian aid/disaster relief team, drawn from Army Royal Engineer Commands, embarked.

Thankfully, as of mid-August, no storm had demanded Wave Knight's attention, but the skills of the commandos were called upon... by the pastor of the church at Caracas Baai, about four miles outside the capital Willemstad.

The engineers found the ministry to be pretty run down – the paint on the outer walls had been degraded badly by the sea air, the gardens were overgrown and strewn with litter and the building itself suffered

from a severe termite infestation.

Tackling these problems was well within the team's ability – especially as the tanker was undergoing a three-week period of maintenance so the engineers had plenty of time on their hands.

It took two days to chop down unwanted trees, remove weeds at their roots, repair the boundary fence and tidy up the grounds before the soldiers moved inside for the main task of revamping the ministry building.

First they had to chip off the old paint, then wash down the walls to remove any salt, before a sealant was applied (to prevent a repeat) and a fresh coating of white paint applied (pictured right) – overall a decorating job which took 12 whole days.

And still there was the termite problem to deal with. The troops found the source of the infestation, got rid of the nest and any other little critters they came across – another two-day task.

"The whole task was very rewarding," said WO2 Jason Betts. "The pastor was continually telling us how grateful he was and our efforts drew the attention of the local newspaper and TV station."

He and his comrades returned to the tanker with a clutch of souvenirs and the sound of the congregation ringing in their ears; worshippers sang for the Wave Knight team in gratitude of their efforts.

"The ship's company thoroughly enjoyed our



visit to Curacao," said CO Capt Peter Selby RFA. We were also able to help the local community carry out some valuable maintenance and showcase our capabilities to both the Dutch Navy and the local community."

From Curacao, the tanker sailed 500 miles to Tortola in the British Virgin Islands, where the embarked forces and sailors carried out disaster relief exercises with local authorities – useful dry runs performed in every island Wave Knight calls at just in case a natural disaster befalls the community.

And then, once more, there was

work for the Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief team – minus the natural disaster. The islands' National Trust Parks also needed some sprucing up,

from fence painting and gravel laying on a trail at the Botanic Gardens to overhauling a walkway and stairs at Shark Bay before restoring a lookout shelter on Sage Mountain. Though the three-day effort demanded plenty of elbow grease in hot, sweaty conditions, it afforded the team the chance to view some of the most beautiful sites on Tortola – sites they probably would not have visited otherwise.

New role for hero helo

THERE'S a fresh lease of life for the Fleet Air Arm's most famous Sea King: a museum attraction.

Sea King Mk4 ZA298 – known throughout the Commando Helicopter Force as 'King of the Junglies' – made the short trip from the hangar of now-disbanded 848 NAS to the FAA Museum in Yeovil.

The 'King of the Junglies', as she is popularly known, came through four conflicts – the Falklands, Bosnia, Iraq and finally Afghanistan, where she suffered extensive damage from an RPG hit – and also delivered the Olympic Flame to the Tower of London back in 2012.

Damage to HMS Ambush off Gib

HMS Ambush has returned to her home base of Faslane after suffering damage just off Gibraltar during a training exercise.

The hunter-killer was involved in a glancing collision with a merchant ship; the latter was unharmed, but the fin of the £1bn nuclear-powered boat suffered some damage.

No one aboard was injured and an investigation into the incident is ongoing.

Fancy Diligence?

BECAUSE the MOD's Disposal Services Authority is selling the forward repair/submarine depot ship after nearly 35 years' service with the RFA.

Built as a support ship for North Sea oil rigs, the then Stena Inspector was chartered by the government for the Falklands conflict.

Anyone wishing to buy Diligence, now in Bidston Dock in Birkenhead, should show their interest by September 26 with viewings of the ship planned for mid to late October.

"I received my tax-free lump sum last week and my first monthly pension payment. I wanted to thank you for your support and diligence to the plight I went through."

Charlie Neve, FPS Member



Charlie had an issue over recognition of his acting rank. Happily we were able to help him obtain a satisfactory resolution.

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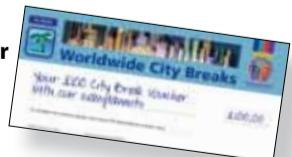


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Home (and away) on the range

43 Cdo's O Squadron in Germany while R hosts USMC in UK

THE men who protect the nation's ultimate weapon spent a fortnight in Germany honing their combat skills.

Normally the men of O Squadron, 43 Commando, can be found patrolling the grounds, buildings and jetties of either Faslane Naval Base or nearby Coulport depot – home, respectively, to the UK's nuclear deterrent submarines and the Trident missiles they carry.

But for two weeks around 60 troops went to the heartland of British Forces Germany and its ranges at Sennelager, just outside Paderborn.

And while O Squadron were abroad, colleagues from R Squadron joined US commandos to blast their way through a state-of-the-art training site in the UK.

Sennelager is home to a replica town for urban warfare training – 'Tin City', originally modelled on Northern Ireland in the 1980s at the height of the Troubles – as well as extensive open spaces for more general infantry training.

To make sure the entire squadron is at the top of its game continually, O builds up to such or similar training three times a year – on this occasion it was the unit's Comacchio and Dubrovnik Troops assigned to Exercise Deutsche Dagger (the German for dagger is actually 'Dolch'...).

The idea is to make sure that the squadron hones its close combat skills in urban warfare – approximately replicating the warren of buildings at Faslane and Coulport – whilst keeping their hand in at the Royal Marines' day-to-day business of infantry.

"Deutsche Dagger is an important part of O Squadron's training year," explained Capt Josh Roughton RM, O's second-in-command. "It allows the Marines to strengthen and develop the skills they employ in their nuclear security duties whilst also refreshing and developing their core 'green' soldiering skills in an extensive training area."

"With the urban warfare training facility and the

live-firing ranges, Sennelager is perfect for our needs."

Moving around Tin City, the commandos used 'simmunition' – simulated ammunition, which possesses the characteristics of live weapons without the lethality.

On the open ranges, the green berets swapped simulated weapons for the real thing with live rounds as the men swept across the fields and through woods, eventually in troop strength – about 30 commandos.

With the training completed, the marines headed on a battlefield tour of Aachen, 130 miles away.

Today the historic city with its magnificent cathedral is a UNESCO heritage site, but in September and October 1944 it was the scene of ferocious fighting between US and German troops; the latter eventually surrendered and Aachen became the first major city in Germany to be captured, but much of it was reduced to rubble.

Some of the tactics used by the soldiers in the house-to-house fighting of 1944 have been incorporated and adapted by today's Royal Marines when they conduct what is now known as Close Quarters Battle.

Just an hour's train ride from Aachen is Cologne, where Deutsche Dagger ended with some downtime for the green berets before they returned to Scotland.

"The Battle of Aachen was an urban battle and the doctrine developed from such engagements was put into practice during the training on Deutsche Dagger. Cologne also proved to be a great city to visit and I know all the lads had a great time," said Lt Jon Sutton, commander of Dubrovnik Troop.

Back in the UK and personnel from Faslane-based 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group hosted the United States Marine Corps Security Force Regiment for Exercise Tartan Eagle.

43 Cdo are responsible for protecting HM Naval Base Clyde and nearby RNAD Coulport while their American counterparts do the same at Kings Bay,

Georgia, and Bangor in Washington.

The 22nd Tartan Eagle saw 43 Cdo, who are also the Royal Navy's experts in board-and-search operations, host their US counterparts.

The two-week exercise consisted of mountain training in Inverness, which included navigation and survival training and climbing Ben Nevis.

It was then off to Britain's most advanced shooting range.... in a business park.... in Gateshead.

For as well as the obligatory cash and carry and Mister Twisters children's indoor playground, the sprawling industrial site at Follingsby Park is also home to Northumbria Police Operational and Tactical Training Centre.

Indoors it features two 60-metre firing ranges and a 'judgmental suite' – a CGI simulator at which the shooter and the target can react to each other's movements.

Outdoors, there's a 'tactical training area' – a mock-up of a street with blocks of flats and terraced houses which you can smash your way into, fight your way around and the like.

"Exercise Tartan Eagle has offered a fantastic opportunity for both the Royal Marines and their American counterparts to train together and share tactics and best practice that can be employed on operations," said Capt Glen Moxham, Second in Command of R Squadron, who organised the UK phase of the exercise.

Capt Eric Stein from the USMC SFR added: "The two weeks have been really useful for ourselves and the guys from 43 Commando."

"Mountain training in particular is something we don't do as much as our Royal Marine counterparts and has been particularly useful and challenging for the USMC."

Royal Marines from R Squadron will travel to Virginia next month for the US phase of Tartan Eagle and will benefit from use of the USMC's live firing 'shoot house' training facility amongst other elements of their extensive training facilities.

■ Clash of the titans, see page 11





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Picture: LPhot Dave Jenkins

Don't look down!

A ROYAL Navy team raised £1,095 by abseiling 190m down the Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth.

The ten-strong team, which consisted of personnel from NMIC, MCSU and civilian contractors, were raising money and awareness for their charities.

MCSU is the Maritime C5ISR Support Unit, a team of engineers from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and civilians who provide around-the-clock support to the Royal Navy's IT systems.

NMIC is the National Maritime Information Centre, representing 17 government departments and agencies.

MSCU raises cash throughout the year for the Royal Navy and

Royal Marines Charity, the Civil Service Benevolent Fund and a local nominated charity, which this year is the MS Society and receives 70 per cent of money raised.

The personnel who took part were PO Lee Short, Cdr Ian Lynn, Neil Palmer, John Warner, Debbie Bellisio, Jon Mills, Phil Dunn, Steve Ablett, Neville Reed and Paul Beasley.

PO Short said: "Many of us in the team work with or know loved ones affected by Multiple Sclerosis."

"The fears and obstacle we have to climb pale in comparison with what they must endure."

"We all are here to support those we know and everyone affected by MS."



Oi, your hands are cold

A YOUNG hen harrier chick protests after being satellite tagged at an MOD base in Scotland.

Two of the birds were tagged at Royal Naval Armament Depot Coulport as part of a national RSPB project to protect and conserve threatened birds of prey.

Another two of the chicks found at the high-security site, the storage facility for Trident nuclear warheads, were ringed.

The satellite tagging was conducted as part of the RSPB's part EU-funded Hen Harrier LIFE+ Project, a five-year programme of nest protection, monitoring, community engagement and work to secure a future for the birds in Scotland.

and northern England.

The data gathered will be monitored to see where the birds go and identify the areas where they are most at risk.

Hen harriers are a red listed bird species of highest conservation concern in the UK.

Sgt John Simpson, MOD Police wildlife crime officer, said: "The Security at HM Naval Base Clyde that protects the Submarine Service also provides a sanctuary for hen harriers, the most endangered bird of prey in the UK."

"We understand that hen harriers are a necessary part of a healthy functioning countryside and are pleased we can play some part in helping to protect them."



Pictures: LPhot Stephen Burke

Clash of the titans

Sporting warriors take on maritime warriors

ROYAL Marines from 43 Commando took on the might of the Glasgow Warriors rugby team.

The men of the Fleet Protection Group played host to players and staff from the team to help prepare them for the new sporting season.

The team visited HMNB Clyde to take part in a tough military fitness circuit led by Royal Marine physical training instructors.

The group also took part in weapons training before travelling to Loch Lomond for some racing on inflatable craft, where they also had to right the vessels.

The gruelling day ended in a relaxing fashion with a barbecue in the grounds

of Cameron House Hotel.

Event organiser Capt Steve Hunt, Training Officer at 43 Cdo said: "As elite athletes, the Glasgow Warriors have a lot in common with Royal Marines. Both pride themselves on their high-levels of fitness and self-discipline, and both know that team work and leadership is absolutely critical."



Richie Vernon, from Glasgow Warriors and Scotland Centre, said: "It was a really tough day and provided a big challenge for us all."

"Pre-season is so important for us though and I know we'll feel the benefit of days like this once the season is under way."

Praising the Glasgow Warriors for their

fitness and motivation, Col Jock Fraser, the CO of 43 Cdo, added: "There is much the Royal Marines can learn from shared experiences like this and I wish the Warriors success in their upcoming season."

The Fleet Protection Group's primary mission is to protect the UK's strategic nuclear deterrent. Teams from 43 Cdo are currently deployed on counter-piracy, counter-narcotics, and maritime operations in the Middle East, Africa and the Caribbean.

43 Cdo is part of 3 Cdo Brigade, the UK's high-readiness expeditionary amphibious force.

Glasgow Warriors play in the Pro12 and the European Professional Club Rugby tournaments.



Crew overawed by Overlord



SAILORS from HMS Westminster pose in front of a 25lb field gun on French soil as they learn about the greatest amphibious operation in history.

With the ship in the latter stages of a massive overhaul in her native Portsmouth, ten crew volunteered to spend a week learning more about Operation Overlord on a battlefield tour – a tour which began not in France, but Southwick Park just north of Portsmouth, Eisenhower's HQ in June 1944, and still the location of the famous 'D-Day map'.

From there, the group crossed the Channel with each member expected to brief shipmates on what transpired at the various sites they would visit, including Omaha Beach, the cliff-top batteries at nearby Pointe du Hoc, Pegasus Bridge (seized by British airborne troops in the first minutes of the invasion), and Colleville sur Mer Cemetery, last resting place for more than 9,000 American servicemen killed liberating France.

"I've learnt a lot. I knew almost nothing about D-Day and I've learnt so much about the operation and the sacrifice all those who lost their lives made," said LWtr Sarah Feltham.

Engineer CPO(ETME) Bobby Davidson said researching the battle then visiting the sites brought history very much back to life.

"It really helped us all get a greater appreciation of how much of an achievement the operation was, given the difficulty and audacity of some of the operations that took place," he said.

The prize for the best presentation was awarded to LET(ME) Isaac Inije, for his insights into the German radar site at Douvres.

"It was a thought-provoking week and the group has gone away with a real appreciation of how large Operation Overlord was – and how and why it was such a massive success," said Sub Lt Simon Priestley, who led the tour.

FLAT caps, waistcoats, trip hazards, trailing hoses, open deck not roped off. Health and safety would have a field day.

Beneath a forest of cranes, shipwrights toil at John Brown's yard on the Clyde on what will become the world's largest warship: HMS Hood – the Mighty Hood.

Our dip into the photographic archives of the Imperial War Museum takes us to some time in the summer of 1917 and once again we call upon the RN's very first official photographer, the ever-reliable Lt Ernest Brooks.

A veteran of Gallipoli and the Somme, Brooks was dispatched to Scotland to capture the efforts of civilian workers for the war effort... and as a spot of schmoozing the Americans, who sent a couple of delegates to look around the Hood.

The battle-cruiser, the last built by any nation, was laid down 100 years ago this month, first of a planned class of four capital ships named after admirals.

18th-Century naval hero and mentor of Nelson, Samuel Hood, gave his name to the first of class, rather than his more recent decedent Horace who had led a squadron of battle-cruisers into action at Jutland and made the ultimate sacrifice when his HMS Invincible blew up.

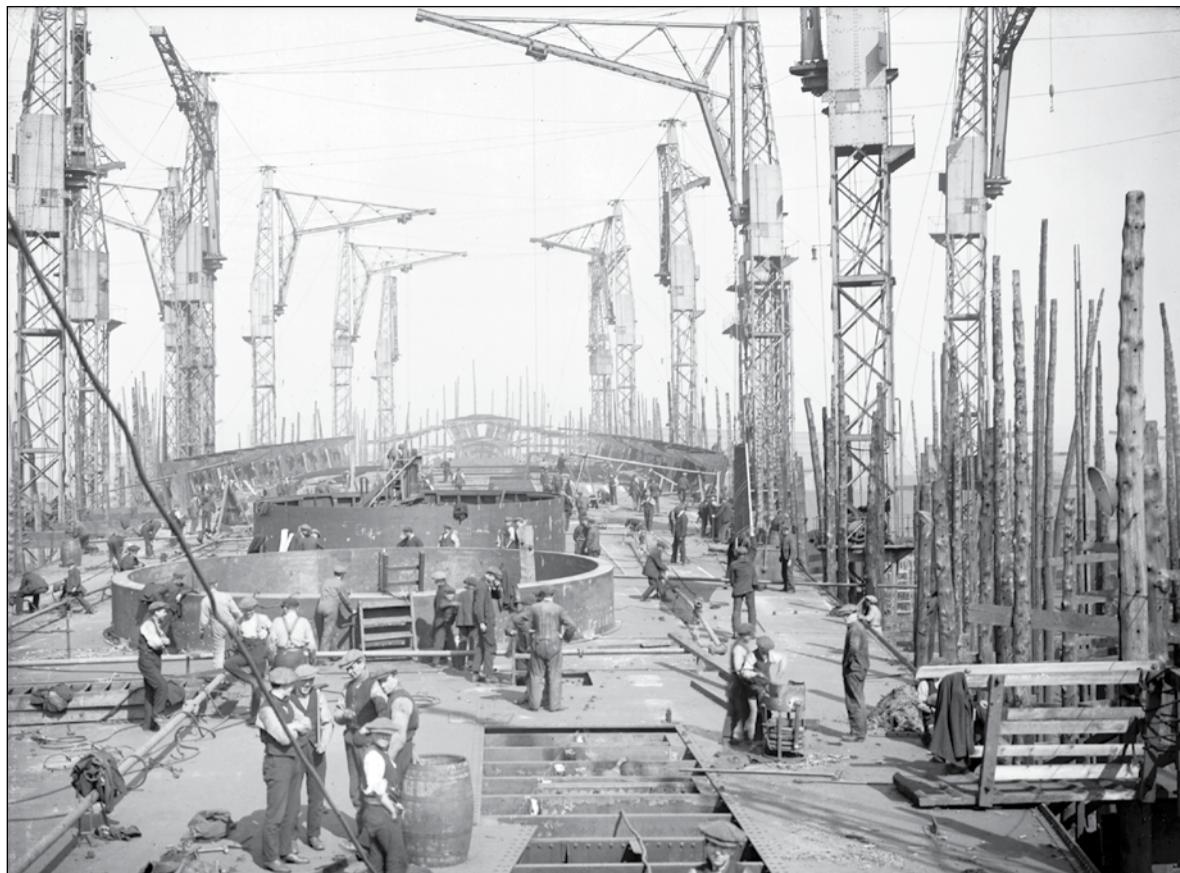
Work was due to start on Hood on the very day of Invincible's demise; it either never did, or was halted immediately to incorporate the lessons of the titanic clash.

When originally ordered by the RN, the Admirals were designed to meet the challenge posed by a new class of German battle-cruisers being constructed.

The destruction of three British battle-cruisers at Jutland and subsequent investigation prompted a redesign to prevent the cataclysmic explosions which had torn apart HMS Indefatigable, Queen Mary and Invincible.

Armour was increased on the deck and turret roofs – the latter were seen as particularly vulnerable at Jutland.

Whatever the lessons of the greatest naval battle of the war, the upper echelons of the RN – right up to the Commander-in-Chief of the



Grand Fleet, Admiral Jellicoe – were adamant: they wanted fast ships with punch, rather than slower, more heavily protected battleships.

And so on September 1 1916, work re-started on Hood; before the year was out, HMS Anson would begin to take shape at Elswick on the Tyne, Howe at Cammell Laird's yard in Birkenhead and HMS Rodney at Govan, again on the Clyde.

Each would be 860ft long, spew 15in shells from four twin turrets, and scythe through the oceans at speeds of up to 31kts (35mph) – impressive for a vessel which displaced 46,000 tonnes (12,000 tonnes heavier than the

Queen Elizabeth class of battleships).

Over the winter, work made good progress – but the war situation had fundamentally changed in the meantime. No longer were the Kaiser's new battle-cruisers the greatest threat but his U-boats which had been waging unrestricted war against shipping since the beginning of February in a bid to strangle Britain's global lifelines.

That submarine campaign (plus some staggering incompetence by the German Foreign Office) helped bring the Americans into the war, but also seriously threatened Britain's participation.

In the spring of 1917, the Empire needed escorts and merchant ships far more than it needed new battle-cruisers. On March 9 work stopped on all the Admirals except for Hood – construction on her was the most advanced – while Jellicoe's successor Beatty lobbied fiercely for her completion.

So while her sisters sat on the blocks for another two years (the ships would not be cancelled until February 1919), Hood was first launched (by the widow of Horace Hood) in August 1918 and then fitted out, finally commissioning in the austere climate of a post-Great War world in May 1920.

With no fighting role, Hood became something of a prestige symbol and showboat – she was the world's largest and most powerful warship.

Ironically, none of the German battle-cruisers the Admirals were designed to counter were ever completed (the design was resurrected 20 years later by the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau), while the names of Rodney, Anson and Howe would be resurrected in future battleships.

As for Hood, beyond world tours and other flag-flying duties, she became increasingly called upon as the RN shrank between the two wars when a capital ship was needed to flex a bit of muscle (such as the Spanish Civil War).

It meant the much-needed major overhaul other WW1 era battleships and battle-cruisers received was never carried out; the last refit performed on Hood was between 1929 and 1931. The outbreak of 1939 once again thwarted any hope of a proper revamp.

Once again, she was called on frequently – the bombardment of the French fleet at Mers el Kebir, and sorties to intercept German surface raiders.

In May 1941, the greatest raider of all – Hitler's brand new flagship Bismarck – set out with cruiser Prinz Eugen to wreak havoc among shipping on the Atlantic lanes. Hood and the still-incomplete Prince of Wales were despatched to intercept.

It was an encounter for which Hood had never been designed and though her foe was similarly armed – eight 15in main guns – Bismarck was much more heavily armoured and embraced 20 years of technological advances and improvements in shipbuilding.

With hindsight, the outcome was never in doubt. Hood lasted not ten minutes in battle, blown apart – like her forebears – by her magazines detonating. Just three men out of a company of more than 1,400 souls survived.

■ This photograph (Q 19450) is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by calling 0207 416 5333.

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Still bags of life left....

SO WE'VE been getting wrong all these years.

It's not a bag. It's a dome.

Yes, that big black blob on the side of a Sea King. A dome. We should have been writing about Domers.

No, it doesn't have the same resonance.

But it's clearly marked on the (exceptionally antiquated) cockpit panel next to a little green light.

It's short for 'radome' – radar dome, the black sack on the side which is the signature feature of the Sea King Mk7.

Other Fleet Air Arm fliers poke fun at the rather ungainly-looking helicopter ("bag goes up, bag goes down"), but it's the reason why these aircraft are still in service while every other variant of this trusty, reliable whirlybird has been retired.

These are the last kings of the skies, seven analogue anachronisms in a digital age.

Much was made of the retirement of the Mk4 and Mk5 Sea Kings when they bowed out of service at the end of March. Most people equated their passing with the end of an era.

"There's a public perception that the Sea King has gone," said pilot Lt Jon Duke. "We are deployed 365 days a year, yet people think we've left service."

'We' are 849 Naval Air Squadron, motto *primus video* – first to see – the eyes of the Fleet, providing it with forewarning of enemy air attack and, since the turn of the 21st Century, the helicopters have also been able to track movements on the ground.

That ability – a bit of a revelation when the Mk7 Airborne Surveillance and Control was introduced – has paid dividends over Iraq and Afghanistan, from tracking the movement of enemy armour to following insurgents' trucks packed



CONTRARY to popular belief the King isn't dead. The Junglies have gone. So too the red and grey rescuers. And the Pingers are long gone. But there's one squadron still flying the legendary Sea King: 849 NAS, and their airborne eyes on the look out for suspicious goings on in the skies and on the ground.

RICHARD HARGREAVES spent a day with the Baggers.

with drugs or weapons.

With the Navy's mission over both troubled countries done, however, the eyes of the Fleet are fixed, er, firmly on the Fleet.

For the final two years of the helicopters' eventful career, the focus is on preparing the way for the successor – a Merlin with a bag, Crowsnest – so it is ready to assume the mantle of safeguarding HMS Queen Elizabeth from incoming air attack and helping to guide F-35 Lightning II jets on to their targets.

In many cases, the transition is less about the machine than the men and women who operate it.

"The Mk7 was way ahead of its time. The step up to the Merlin is only about ten per cent more advanced," explained the squadron's senior observer Lt Cdr James Taylor.

The console he and a fellow observer sit at feature 22in colour displays and touch-sensitive pads – "effectively two iPads and two iMacs", yet all this was dreamed up 15 years ago, long before the prefix 'i-' meant anything.

It is remarkably intuitive – "you're never more than three button presses away from where you want to be," said Lt Cdr Taylor.

It's why the Crowsnest won't be too much different – "evolution, not revolution".

Ok, that's the good news about the transition. The tricky bit is the relative

shortage of sea time.

"After 20 years of continual operations at sea, suddenly we have a generation of aircrew who have experience of little but flying over Afghanistan and a lot of engineers, especially the junior ones, who've rarely been to sea," said Lt Duke.

There are just seven Mk7s in existence, cared for and flown by around 250 personnel, with two helicopters and around 50 men and women permanently deployed in the Middle East where they're being used to monitor both maritime and air traffic.

The latter detachment is getting in sea time from the back of RFAs. Those back in the UK seize every opportunity to take part in exercises. And there's a lot of simulator time.

Sea King crews are blessed with probably the best flight simulator in the Fleet Air Arm. The cab sits on hydraulics. The crew under instruction look out upon stunning 3D high-resolution graphics. Most of the UK has been mapped, as have Afghanistan and Iraq – with the weather you'd expected to find in them.

Sitting behind a bank of touch-screen control panels, instructor Steve King causes various failures for the crew to contend with.

Despite the demise of most Sea Kings, his simulator is as busy as ever – the Baggers need to keep up

their training, but Norwegians and Germans also visit Culdrose to use it (the latter are retiring their Sea Kings by 2019). Up to 50 'sorties' per week are completed on the trainer.

From a pilot's point of view, a Sea King is a Sea King. There's little difference between the various models – almost all the cockpit dials and switches are identical.

But step out of the cockpit and into the rest of the cabin and the Mk7 is a different beast.

Even by Sea King standards there's very little space: two observer consoles, hydraulics to raise and lower the dome, a couple of fans to keep the sack inflated, computer processors and 'the fridge' (to keep the systems, not the crew, cool), flares, chaff and the rest of the defensive aids suite. They all make the helicopter Mk7 heavy and lumbering.

"The bag does have an effect on the aircraft, but nowhere nearly as much as it would have without it and a radar spinning away," explained instructor Lt Iain 'Pinger' King.

The sack makes the Sea King's handling (mostly) predictable, although occasionally you can suffer from 'bag rock' when air builds up behind it.

Far more important is 'dome awareness' – especially avoiding landing with the bag inflated and down. "You really don't want to do that. You will squash it."

There's only one pilot on a Bagger – "there's no added comfort blanket of a second pilot," Pinger pointed out, although one of the two observers steps into the spare left-hand seat for landings and take-offs to help with checks and come to the fore if there are any malfunctions.

The 'synthetic trainer' is first rate. But it is, of course, no substitute for the real thing.

So 849 is rotating its three flights – Palembang, Okinawa and Normandy – through the Gulf for several weeks at a time; it's a double experience for air and ground crews – a front-line theatre and sea time.

"You provide a very small piece of the jigsaw out in the Gulf. There's no instant reward as with a search and rescue. But a few days or weeks later, you'll hear a snippet of news or a report. It's then you realise that the information you gathered was important," said Lt Duke.

At this time of year, it's also punishingly hot with temperatures soaring above 40°C.

Even at a 'mere' 36°C, however, it can very unpleasant. "You can climb, hit 38°C before the air suddenly dries out and sweat instantly evaporates," Lt Duke adds.

"It's 40°C outside and you can be freezing."

A Sea King pilot for six years, he's sad that the helicopter's end is nigh. "Yes, we're the last of the old guard, but it's a lovely aircraft," he says.

"But we're also looking quite a way into the future. We have to be ready for the new carriers."

Lt Cdr Taylor reckons a dozen observers and half a dozen pilots will be ready to fly Crowsnest when it enters service in 2018.

"The last Sea King pilots and observers have been trained, but we're not resting on our laurels. Everything we do now is geared towards the F-35 and the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers," said Lt Cdr Taylor.

"This could be sad, I could get nostalgic about the end of the Sea King, but for me, this is exciting."

"You join the Navy to go to sea, to fly from a carrier flight deck, working with fast jets."

"That's exactly what we're working towards."





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Summit to be proud of



WITH their goal in the distance dominating the Himalayan skyline, two military climbers cross French Pass during the first combined Armed Forces mountaineering expedition in four years.

The objective: to scale some of the most challenging mountains on the planet and break new ground in the study of the effects of high altitude on the body, especially heart rate.

Before heading to Nepal tiny monitors were implanted to collect data on every heart beat, information which has never before been gathered by a military climbing expedition.

It wasn't the only break from the norm on the exped, which was led by veteran RN mountaineer Surg Cdr Adrian Mellor.

The team were determined to reach the 8,167-metre (26,794ft) Mount Dhaulagiri, the world's seventh-highest peak, Alpine style – carrying their equipment, without using fixed ropes and without bottled oxygen, an ambitious challenge irrespective of the medical aspects of the expedition.

It took the team eight days just to reach base camp – a combination of delayed flights, bad roads, breakdowns and six days to acclimatisate – at Hidden Valley, some 5,100 metres (16,730ft) up – higher than some of the party had ever been before.

Assaults on a succession of 'lesser'

peaks were lined up – including some mountains never scaled by Britons – before the climbers contemplated tackling Dhaulagiri itself; its ridge dominated the skyline, an ever-present reminder to the military expedition of what lay ahead.

"Every day involved constant monitoring of vital signs for signs of altitude sickness and huddling together in the mess tent against the cold," explained Maj Richard Mackie from the Commando Training Centre in Lympstone and one of the members of the main climbing team.

Having mastered the first summit – Damphus (6,035m) – to get used to both climbing and the atmospheric conditions, the military men and women moved on to Tukuche, whose 6,920m peak dominated the skyline from Hidden Valley Base Camp.

It proved to be a far more challenging climb, from crossing a glacier and overcoming crevasses to strong winds.

The latter forced the Brits to abandon scaling Tukuche's main peak and attempt its western summit which no UK climber had ever stood atop, some 70 metres lower than the true mountaintop.

"After a period of pure elation, disbelief and euphoria, we shook hands, took some photos, enjoyed the view down on our tiny tents at base camp and across to our main objective

the northeast ridge of Dhaulagiri," said Maj Mackie.

"We slowly realised the magnitude of our next task more than 1,200m higher."

With the *hors d'oeuvre* out of the way, time for the main course.

Making their way across French Pass – 5,250 metres above sea level – for their new base camp, the mountaineers were afforded their first clear view of Dhaulagiri's northeast ridge.

"The scale of the mountain was breathtaking and can never be done justice behind the lens of a camera," says Maj Mackie.

"Further piqued by the numerous memorials to climbers who lost their lives attempting to climb this mountain, the deep realisation of the challenge ahead of us sunk home and we all walked the remaining hour to base camp in relative silence."

The mountaineers established base camp at 4,800 metres. From there, three intermediate camps could be set up before the final attack on the peak.

The Brits found several other large teams of various nationalities were also on the mountain and had already fixed ropes as far as Camp 2 (6,600m) – but the climb was still hazardous.

The route involved a steep snow ramp with short vertical rock and ice sections leading to a 'snow finger' which passed beneath a lesser peak

climbers dubbed 'the little Eiger', where unpredictable avalanches and rock falls were commonplace.

From there, they faced a glacier crossing threatened by hanging seracs – peaks of ice – from neighbouring Tukuche Peak and the east flank of Dhaulagiri, leading to a crevassed snow slope to the northeast col and Camp 1.

The climb to Camp 2 was less hazardous and offered some jaw-dropping vistas of some of the Himalayas other peaks – Nilgiri, Annapurna, Tukuche and, in the hazy distance, the tips of some of the mighty mountains of the Karakorum range, among them the fearsome K2.

Two teams were poised to make an attempt on the summit from the final camp – 7,550 metres up.

The first spent three days huddling in a small tent, most of the time battered by strong winds, with the climbers mostly unable to eat, breathe, stay warm or sleep much.

They filed back down the mountain, while the second summit team replaced them hoping for a break in the weather.

"Unfortunately the wind continued and they spent an interesting night wondering if their tent was going to lift off with them in it," said Maj Mackie.

Two climbers – one Basque, one Argentinian – seized on an unexpected 12-hour weather window and reached

the summit, before returning to the camp to celebrate with the Brits.

But the mountaineers were reminded of the dangers of Dhaulagiri that very same day; an Indian climber who reached the summit was killed as he made his way back down.

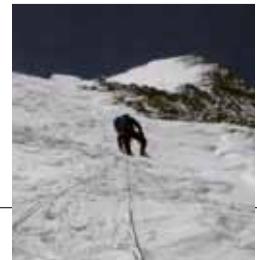
His death cast a shadow over the remote, high-altitude camp and when the weather closed in again, the Brits had finally lost out on the chance to reach the mountain's peak – they had a deadline to reach base camp and eventually return to the UK.

After all the effort, training and planning which had gone into the expedition, to be thwarted on the cusp of success by the weather was, says Maj Mackie, "a bitter pill to swallow".

But he and his fellow mountaineers counterbalanced that disappointment with what had been achieved on the peaks, slopes and glaciers of the Himalayas.

"We all developed hugely as mountaineers and individuals as a result of this physically and mentally challenging experience and I have no doubt it will be borne through on future expeditions and operations.

"I am extremely grateful to have been given the opportunity to be part of this expedition – we came home safely as a team and cemented friendships for life having been tested to our limits on a sublime 8,000-metre Himalayan peak."





Off the coasts of Lithuania, Bahrain and Japan, British and foreign mine warfare experts unite against

The common enemy

ADMITTEDLY, they're not all as easy to identify – or neutralise – as this spiked tethered object, your stereotypical mine.

But in whatever size, shape, strength and type they come in, they remain the scourge of mariners and the cheap weapon of choice for some nations (not the UK) wishing to cause havoc by blocking global shipping lanes.

Thankfully, there are far more nations committed to stopping mine warfare than willing to use the devices.

The world's largest mine-warfare exercise, IMCMEX, drew pretty much every nation committed to ridding the Seven Seas of the underwater explosives to the Middle East back in April.

That's now five months ago. If you don't keep hunting (even for dummy mines), the skill can quickly fade. You'll never forget – it's like riding a bike.

But you won't be at the top of your game.

Different water properties, tidal conditions, currents, visibility, temperatures all conspire against divers and mine clearance experts.

Now throw different types of mine, different mine-hunting kit – everything from sonar to robot submersibles – and different practices into the mix and you start to understand the complexity of what our minehunters and dive teams are up against.

The relatively secluded waters of Mutsu Bay at the northern tip of the main island of Honshu serve as the 'playground' for the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force's major annual test of its minehunting forces.

For the first time, two RN officers were invited to watch proceedings centred on Ominato Naval Base, about 400 miles north of Tokyo.

The 20 or so ships left port

in formation for what was a test of the core of the Japanese mine warfare forces to see whether they could deal with all possible underwater explosive devices.

Although the Royal Navy enjoys a worldwide reputation for being at the forefront of mine warfare, the Japanese have a wealth of experience in the field – not least clearing 55,000 of their own and 17,000 American mines laid around their coast during World War 2.

While Japanese minehunters and dive teams have largely focused their efforts in home waters, they have dispatched forces to help with the international effort clearing mines from the Gulf after the first war with Saddam in 1991 and most recently took part in the world's largest mine warfare exercise – alongside the Royal Navy among other participants – staged in the Middle East.

The Japanese were expected to locate and

neutralise mechanical and influence mines – the former detonate if struck by a ship or submarine, the latter blow up when 'influenced' by a passing vessel, such as detecting its magnetic field, propellers or noticing changes in water pressure.

On top of that, the Japanese were also keen to develop their use of autonomous minehunting systems – a field the RN is particularly keen on, especially with Unmanned Warrior looming in Scotland next month; that sees companies from around the world demonstrating what their hi-tech systems can bring to naval warfare.

"This is the first time that Royal Navy observers have attended the Japanese mine counter-measures exercise and it comes at a time when we're seeking to revolutionise our operations incorporating greater use of autonomous technology," said Lt Simon Reeves, Executive XO of Portsmouth-based minehunter HMS Hurworth.

"The Japanese have a capable, professional and defensive-focused mine counter-measures force."

He observed the exercise alongside Cdr Donald Crosbie, the RN's Liaison Officer with the Japanese Navy and the US Navy's Seventh Fleet, based in the Far East, plus colleagues from South Korea and Australia.

But not Lithuania. No, the Baltic nation was busy hosting Open Spirit, a month-long workout for various nations who rose to the challenge of helping their Lithuanian counterparts deal with the latest in home-made bombs – and historic explosives left over from two world wars.

A 17-strong team from Fleet Diving Unit 2 – experts in making sure harbours, jetties and port facilities are safe for shipping to use – took their kit to Klaipeda, including mini robot mine detectors.

The Lithuanians operate two former RN warships as part of their mine warfare forces (ex Hunt-class ships Cottesmore and Dulverton).

The Brits spent the first week of Open Spirit explaining and demonstrating to the Lithuanian bomb disposal experts some of the latest techniques and equipment used both on land (RN divers worked extensively in Afghanistan to deal with the ever-present threat of improvised explosive devices) and at sea.

Key to the diving unit's work in harbours is the REMUS 100 – it looks like a mini torpedo, but actually scans the seabed up to depths of 100 metres (hence the name) looking for anything out of place, something dive teams used to do with a fingertip search. The device scoured more than a square mile of Klaipeda harbour.

And on land, the Lithuanians had a go at wearing the cumbersome, but crucial, bomb disposal suit we use when making 'the long walk' to deal with a suspicious device.

After a week's Anglo-Lithuanian combined training, Open Spirit began in earnest when other dive teams and minehunters – participants included the USA, Canada, Poland, Estonia and Germany – arrived for the live, at-sea phase of the exercise.

Although more than 70 years have passed since the end of WW2, the Baltic seabed remains littered with unexploded ordnance from minefields sown by the warring nations to bombs discarded by aircraft (including the RAF's).

And Klaipeda itself – back then it was the German city of Memel – was the scene of particularly bitter fighting over the winter of 1944-45.

It fell to the FDU2 divers to identify and neutralise any historic ordnance they came across.

They came across more than 20 contacts – two of them turned out to be sea mines; collectively the Open Spirit participants found 15 such devices, one just off the entrance to the port of Klaipeda which is both Lithuania's main port and home of her Navy.

For the Brits, normally based at Horsea Island in Portsmouth Harbour, the month in the

Baltic was a very worthwhile experience, from sharing their knowledge and expertise with like-minded colleagues to proving they could work seamlessly with divers and mine warfare experts from around the globe.

"Our deployment to Lithuania proved to be very successful," said Lt Rob Tristram. "All our training objectives were met and the unit contributed very effectively to Open Spirit.

"We also formed some close links with the Lithuanian Navy who hosted both the exercise and training effectively and in a most hospitable manner."

Open Spirit comes but once a year. Anglo-American workouts in the Gulf are a weekly occurrence – but they're usually a small-scale affair.

But every three months, a squadex – squadron exercise – raises the bar a little. Say to squadron level.

That squadron was a mixiblob of British and USN, led by command and mother ship RFA Lyme Bay (home to the senior RN mine warfare staff in the Gulf).

Now add Bangor, Penzance, USS Gladiator and Sentry, an American Expeditionary Mine Countermeasures Company – similar to our Fleet Diving Units – and a US Mine Hunting-trials Unit who are trying out new kit.

With replica mines on the Gulf seabed, five different sonar types were used to locate them – on traditional ships, robot vehicles, small devices operated by divers, and mighty Sea Dragon helicopters towing 'sleds' through the water with sonars attached.

There was some 'healthy' competition between the two navies to see who could find the most mines – but for the man directing the exercise with his staff aboard Lyme Bay, Cdr David Morgan, he was less interested in light-hearted rivalry and more focused on collective effectiveness.

"Every unit brings a different capability to the table, ensuring that the sum of the total is far greater than the individual parts. It is a team game," he said.

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Raiders drop in at Raleigh

THE Royal Navy Raiders Parachute Display Team make a spectacular entrance at HMS Raleigh's open day.

Seven of the team dropped on to the Torpoint base's parade ground as around 5,000 visitors turned up to look behind the scenes at the training establishment.

There were also performances by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Plymouth, military working dogs and field gun runs featuring HMS Raleigh's crew and Carbeile School's junior field gun teams.

Visitors were invited to look around the Royal Navy Submarine School and also see where the Navy trains personnel to deal with emergencies at sea, including floods, fires and first aid.

An accommodation block where recruits live during their initial training was open to give the public a taste of life as a trainee sailor and visitors were also invited to join in with a marching lesson.

Kate Morgan, from

Worcester, who was visiting Devon on holiday with her parents, said: "I've loved the day, the marching and in the gym."

Living in the accommodation blocks I'd imagine would be really hard, especially if you came here and didn't know anyone."

Paula Moon, from Newton Abbot, added: "I served here as a Wren and I was here in the 1970s when Princess Anne came and laid the first stone for the new buildings.

"I've been going around trying to remember where the rooms were that we slept in and somebody has now told me where they were, so I can picture it a bit more."

Bernie Crean's son CPO Shaun Crean recently joined Raleigh as one of the instructors.

Both were surprised to find out that one of the training divisions is named after their ancestor, WO Tom Crean, who sailed with both Scott and Shackleton on their expeditions to the Antarctic.

Bernie, originally from

Liverpool but who now lives in Devon, said: "I grew up with all the tales of him and family members used to go over to Annascaul in Ireland, where he was from, for various celebrations.

"I didn't realise until I came here that he was one of the people who found Scott's body."

"I was pleased and proud to hear that a Division had been named after him. If you look at the photographs of Tom, you'll see that we've all got that Crean nose."

Other attractions included various stands and demonstrations, such as a cooking display by chefs and trainees at the Defence Maritime Logistics School.

CO of Raleigh, Capt Rob Bellfield, said: "It's been a fantastic day."

"Our main focus was to make it a day that all members of the family could enjoy and give people the chance to find out a little bit more about what we do here, the Royal Navy and the Armed Forces in general."



● Wren ratings work on mine netting during World War 1, supervised by a Wren Officer

Ticket deadlines loom

PLANNING for three major Wrens centenary events next year is advancing well – and deadlines to apply for tickets are approaching fast.

Following the WRNS100 time capsule article in last month's *Navy News*, the National Museum of the Royal Navy has issued a formal call for people to help contribute artefacts and memories for next year's exhibition.

Full details of the exhibition, *Pioneers to Professionals: Women and the Royal Navy*, and what the museum is seeking can be found at www.nmrn.org.uk/news-events/nmrn-blog/appeal-artefacts-celebrate-100-years-women-royal-navy

The museum holds a lot of World War 2 material, but is keen to present women who served in the WRNS between 1949–1993, and those in the post integration

era from 1993 onwards.

The exhibition will be officially launched on International Women's Day, Wednesday March 8 2017, and will run until late autumn next year.

Ticket applications for the London celebrations at Greenwich on Saturday July 15 2017 and the Portsmouth Cathedral service and reception on Saturday November 4 2017 are now open.

Demand is expected to be high so applicants are advised to apply early, noting the cut-off dates.

For the London event, admission is by ticket only (£25 per head) and application forms must be submitted by October 1 2016.

While there is no charge for the Portsmouth event, admission is again by ticket only, and application forms must be submitted by December 1 2016.

The November event will be followed by an afternoon tea reception at Portsmouth Guildhall, for which there is a charge of £11.50 per head and a separate ticket will be required.

Full details and application forms can be obtained from the RN website www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/features/wrns100

All applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

During the service of thanksgiving in Portsmouth the specially-commissioned Commemorative Stone will be dedicated.

The appeal to fund the stone, launched in July's *Navy News*, has already raised over £6,000, and stonemason Robyn Golden-Hann has recently taken delivery of a one-ton block of Portland stone.

Fun reigns at Kings Camp

A POPULAR sporting holiday for children of military families could expand after proving a success.

The annual summer Kings Camps returned to Plymouth Naval Base for the third successive year, offering children of Royal Navy families a chance to let off steam with others of similar backgrounds.

So popular are the three weeks of football, swimming, lacrosse, basketball, and art, that this year's event was expanded by a week and 100 children.

Kings Camps provide holiday sports and activity day camps for children and work closely with the many Royal Naval communities across the UK. The costs are subsidised by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and the Kings Foundation. The camps are manned by teachers taking a 'working' holiday.

Harvey Drake, 13, of Eggbuckland College, who attended with his sister Sydney, said: "This is my second year. I love it because everyone is so kind. I also learn new skills and it's great fun. Sydney and I have both made new friends."

There will be dates available during the Easter holiday next year. To book your child's place call 0114 263 2160.



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Wings for Winkle

"MY FATHER would have been overwhelmed by the turn-out and the display."

From a lectern, Glenn Melrose Brown surveyed the array of tables filled with people – doyens of flight, friends, family, journalists, past, present and future naval aviators, some 650 people in all – spread across a hangar at RNAS Yeovilton.

On the standings outside, a Swordfish. Sea Vixen. Sea Hawk. Wildcats (past and present). Hawks. A T-6 Texan – just a few of the aircraft mustered to celebrate the life and accomplishments of Capt Eric 'Winkle' Brown.

With the exception of the new Wildcat helicopters, he flew them all. And 480 other aircraft types.

When he passed away in February at the grand age of 97, naval aviators were determined his death would not go unmarked by a Service which continues to exploit the pioneering advice and guidance he gave – 'Winkle's wisdoms', as his biographer Paul Beaver calls them.

The result? A day at the spiritual home of the Fleet Air Arm dedicated to the man and the machines he flew.

The life story of Eric Melrose Brown is one novelists would struggle to dream up.

The son of a WW1 aviator, he attended the 1936 Berlin Olympics, met the most famous German fliers of the day, served as a Naval fighter pilot (downing two Focke-Wulf Condors, the long-range scourge of convoys in the Atlantic), trained Canadian and US fliers, spent six years as a test pilot (apparently he had a pulse rate half that of most people – it meant he could withstand G Forces others could not), lost his home to a V1 flying bomb, interrogated Nazi leaders and war criminals, including Hermann Göring, became the first man to land a jet on a carrier, trained future astronauts in the art of carrier landings, served alongside Alan Shepard (the fifth man on the Moon) on exchange at Pax River (and was also friends with the first moonwalker, Neil Armstrong), assisted the rebirth of German naval aviation in the Cold War, served as ADC to the Queen and commanded RNAS Lossiemouth.

And that only takes us to the end of his RN career in 1970. Thereafter he oversaw improvements in helicopter safety – particularly those operating to the then-new North Sea rigs – served as president of the Royal Aeronautical Society and gave talks and presentations at home and abroad championing flying, Naval aviation especially.

And although he last sat in a cockpit back in 1994, such was his depth of knowledge that Lockheed Martin consulted him over the design of the Navy's new stealth fighter, the F-35.

Very late in his remarkable life, he was 'rediscovered' by the media – TV documentaries, articles, guest of the 3,000th edition of *Desert Island Discs*.

And as a passionate supporter of the Union, he received a personal note of thanks from then premier David Cameron for flying the flag for a United Kingdom during the Scottish independence referendum in 2014.

And with that canter, we've only scratched the surface of Eric Brown's life.

Pretty much every one of the 650 guests at the memorial event could share a story.

Pilot Lt Cdr Ralph Jameson RNR was invited on to the 'goofers' gallery' on HMS Indefatigable to watch Capt Brown bring a twin-engined Mosquito down on a carrier flight deck for the first time in the Firth of Clyde – all played out in the tightest security.

"There were five landings on the first day, three on the next. On the third, the arrestor hook sheared. Eric opened up the throttle and flew off – an absolute feat of airmanship."

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Benjamin Bathurst – one of only three men holding the highest naval rank in the land – flew helicopters extensively half a century ago.

"Everything we did in naval aviation during the 1960s and 70s was very much influenced by Eric," he said.

"He was a truly amazing, unique man,

the total pilot, but also an absolute gentleman and very modest about his achievements.

"He possessed that very rare knack of flying to the limits and analysing what he'd done." Indeed, one colleague described Eric as "his own black box recorder".

For the admiral, the day celebrating Eric Brown's life wasn't purely about the man or the many machines he clambered into. "It's also a reminder that the Navy is in the flying business."

Sir Benjamin did most of his Naval flying half a century ago. Sub Lt Alasdair Sedgeworth is at the opposite end of the spectrum, having recently completed his basic flying training with 703 NAS at Barkston Heath with the goal of becoming a fast jet pilot of tomorrow.

Shortly before joining the RN, he was given a copy of Winkle's memoirs *Wings on my Sleeve*.

"On every page there's a story which would be the highlight of my flying career – and then there's his life away from flight, which is just as remarkable."

Indeed. Fluent in German (he was in the country when war broke out in 1939), he was taken aloft by the legendary fighter/stunt pilot Ernst Udet and invited to watch and meet Hanna Reitsch, Germany's most famous aviatrix and friend of Hitler.

And, in the later stages of WW2, it invariably fell to him to evaluate captured Luftwaffe aircraft; he could read the instruments and manuals – not for Eric Brown were the slapdash methods of some test pilots who "kicked the tyres and lit the fires".

He wasn't averse to the odd stunt, though. Trying to impress his fiancée Evelyn while serving in Northern Ireland, he buzzed her school, waggled his wing tips, narrowly missed some rugby posts and knocked about 6in of masonry off Belfast Cathedral. The escapade earned him two weeks on the ground – probably the longest period he went without flying during his incredible career.

Both as a front-line Fleet Air Arm flier and as a test pilot, death was a constant companion. He confronted it on more than one occasion, but never voluntarily talked about it.

He was the only man in his liferaft to survive the sinking of HMS Audacity in 1941 – each time a shipmate died, his body had to be cut free and allowed to drift off.

And at the war's end he was one of the first four Allied personnel to enter Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. "It was etched on his memory for the rest of his life, especially the stench," said his son, who was never allowed to follow in his father's footsteps – his mother forbade it.

"He had a razor-sharp mind, he was charismatic, eloquent, a magical sparkle in his eyes. He was dutiful to his Royal Navy uniform and to his country. But most of all, he was my dad."

That drew the biggest round of applause of the day.

Guest of honour the Duke of York – Falklands veteran and pilot of Sea Kings and Lynx – described Eric Brown (he disliked the nickname 'Winkle' given decades ago due to his supposedly small stature – he stood 5ft 7in tall) as "an inspirational person, a great man, but also great fun to be around."

"People in the Fleet Air Arm know the contribution made by Eric. They understand the shoulders upon which they now stand. We should never forget that."

Evidently they haven't – not yet at any rate.

"His attitude to flying – methodical, professional, watching his instruments – is inspirational. He was very much a pilot ahead of his time," said Sub Lt Sedgeworth.

"It's a shame that we've lost people like Eric Brown to history – he was the last of his era."



A record unmatched

2,407 landings on carriers

2,721 launches from flight decks

487 aircraft types flown

11 crashes

8 aircraft a day as a test pilot

3 Guinness World Records (first jet landing on a carrier, most aircraft types flown, most flight deck launches)

● (Top) A Sea Vampire – the first jet to land on a carrier – and the Sea Vixen interceptor fly in company over Yeovilton during the unique 90-minute display laid on to honour Eric Brown which also featured the RN Historic Flight's wonderful Swordfish (above) and a stubby Wildcat (one of Eric's favourite aircraft) escorted by two brand-new Wildcat helicopters

Pictures: LPhotos Dan Rosenbaum and Paul Hall





Visitors enjoy static displays as bad weather hits Culdrose air day

Grounded



EVERY cloud has a silver lining and there were plenty of both at RNAS Culdrose's air day.

Thick cloud meant flying was restricted to some last-minute take-offs (and landings by the Hawks of 736 NAS).

But the absence of activity in the air meant visitors got the chance to get up close and personal with static displays and Royal Navy personnel who offered a glimpse of life in the Fleet Air Arm.

Long queues formed to climb onboard aircraft, including a Merlin Mk2 from the Flying Tigers of 814 NAS, or jump into the driving seat of a military fire engine or have a go at dousing a fire with Naval firefighters.

One of the most popular displays was of a WW1 Bristol Scout biplane, restored to full working order by brothers David and Rick Bremner.

The duo found the remains of the aircraft in their grandfather's shed after he died.

Flight Sub Lt Francis 'Bunnie' Bremner flew the plane between 1914 and 1918 while serving with the Royal Naval Air Service at Gallipoli.

"We did a couple of modifications as we weren't too happy with things but it's been a pleasure to restore and it is 95 per cent how it would have been when grandad flew it," said David.

The main arena saw marching bands, a field gun competition, acrobatic displays from the likes of the Black Eagles and Flyin' Ryan motorcycles and unarmed combat demonstrations from the Royal Marines Commando Display Team.

Culdrose visitors proved a hardy bunch, many coming equipped with small tents while others set up 'camp' in the Made in Cornwall hangar which showcased produce from the county – yes, there were plenty of pasties.

As the cloud slowly lifted towards the end of the afternoon the distinctive whine of the retired Sea Harriers echoed across the airfield.

The planes, which are used to train aircraft handlers, taxied along the runway much to the delight of spectators.

They were just one example of how the home of carrier aviation is preparing for the Royal Navy's new age of aircraft carriers.

There was finally a flurry of activity in the air with Rich Goodwin providing one of the highlights with an unorthodox take-off as he left Cornwall in his Muscle biplane, leaving a trail of white smoke in his wake.

Lt Cdr Chris Götke then took off in his T6 Texan, followed by the Wildcats of the Black Cats display team, giving visitors a taste of what might have been. Still, there's always next year...



● Above: The Black Eagles acrobatic display team; Left: The Muscle biplane takes off in the cloud-laden skies



● Main image: A Wildcat from the Black Cats helicopter display team hovers in the background as Lt Cdr Chris Gotke prepares to leave Culdrose in a T6 Texan

Pictures: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow, Bob Sharples and Graeme Stringer



Service honours Fittleton victims

A SERVICE is to be held in an English village church to commemorate the loss of 12 sailors with their ship 40 years ago this month.

Ton-class RNR minesweeper HMS Fittleton had sailed from her home port of Shoreham in Sussex on September 11 1976 for a major NATO exercise, Teamwork 76.

Manned mainly by personnel from London Division of the Royal Naval Reserve, Fittleton joined other RNR minesweepers for the exercise, the maritime phase of which included the North Atlantic and North Sea.

On completion, the seven-strong flotilla was due to sail to Hamburg for a three-day official visit before returning home.

On September 20, en route to the German port, Fittleton was ordered to take part in a

mail transfer with frigate HMS Mermaid, with a rendezvous point 80 miles north of the Dutch island of Texel.

The transfer began in mid-afternoon, in good weather and relatively calm sea, but the first approach by the minesweeper was unsuccessful.

Mermaid, at 2,500 tons, had around five times the displacement of Fittleton, and her design made it tricky for the minesweeper to approach and achieve the correct position for a jackstay transfer of mailbags.

Increased water pressure between the hulls caused Fittleton to fall back, so a second approach was made.

This time hydrodynamic forces forced the little ship ahead of the frigate and pulled her in.

Fittleton struck Mermaid a glancing blow, then as the minesweeper's CO tried to

accelerate out of trouble, the frigate's bow pressure wave skewed the smaller ship and put her across the bigger ship's path.

The frigate's screws were immediately put astern, but it could not prevent the ship striking Fittleton's flank and rolling her over – the whole incident, from the first collision, lasted less than a minute, and she capsized in a matter of seconds.

As Fittleton went over some of her crew managed to jump clear, but many were trapped.

Sister ship HMS Crofton was first to her aid, and was skilfully brought stern-on to the upturned hull, picking up those who were thrown clear and a non-swimmer who had clambered onto the keel.

Some who had found themselves in air pockets managed to scramble free.

Five more Tons, HM Ships Crichton, Hodgeston, Kedleston, Repton and Wiston, also joined the rescue operation, and 32 survivors – three of them injured – were eventually transferred to Mermaid.

Tapping was heard from inside the vicinity of Fittleton's engine room, but the hull was too thick to talk to anyone inside.

In an attempt to keep Fittleton afloat until specialised salvage vessels arrived, minesweeping wires were passed under her propeller shafts supported by two minesweepers, but the wires were

● Three bodies recovered from the wreck of HMS Fittleton were brought back to Chatham by frigate HMS Rhyl



● The raised wreck of HMS Fittleton shows the extent of the damage she sustained when she was struck by HMS Mermaid, capsized and subsequently sank



● The Fittleton memorial window at HMS President in London

not strong enough, and parted.

Other measures, such as blowing a hole in the hull, or ramming her in a bid to cut her in two, had been rejected because of the danger to anyone still alive in the ship, as they would most likely cause her to sink immediately.

Rescue teams from the RN and the Dutch and German navies rushed to the scene by helicopter to rescue some of the missing men who were still alive in an air pocket in the hull.

The following day, Mermaid landed the bodies of two men, and 32 survivors, at Harwich.

Back in the North Sea, British and Dutch frogmen started diving in relays from first light,

but with knocks on the hull – now sunk in 160ft of water – going unanswered, the operation shifted to recovery.

Sea Kings from 706 Naval Air Squadron in Culdrose and fixed-wing aircraft from 781 NAS also supported the operation, flying specialist personnel and equipment out to the scene.

Cables with marker buoys were attached to the hull, to guide the salvage experts.

RN divers, working from a German salvage tug, attached heavy steel hawsers to Fittleton's hull, and the lifting operation was carried out under the command of frigate HMS Achilles.

The first attempt by the crane

Magnus, in the later afternoon of September 21, had to be aborted when a hawser slipped, but, during that night, using searchlights and flares, the minesweeper was raised to the surface.

She was beached at Den Helder on October 4, where an officer and ten ratings were put on board to look after the personal effects of the ship's company.

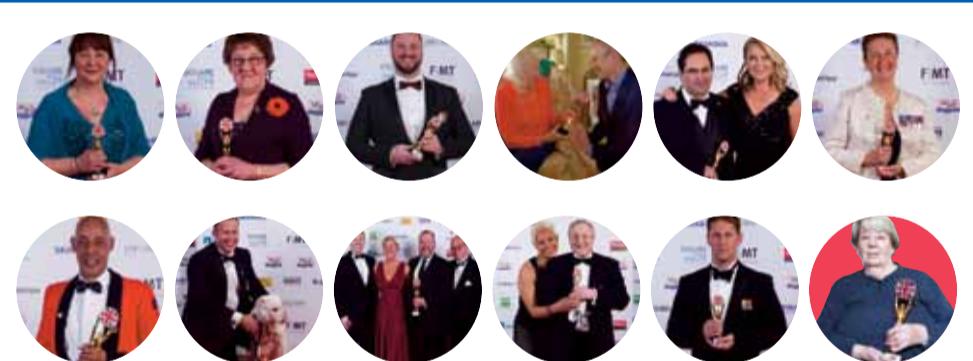
They were met by a scene of chaos, with the added complication of a considerable amount of money being present; the men had been paid that day.

The ship was towed back to the UK, returning to Chatham on October 11, but her condition – planks covered a hole in her hull and her mast and funnel had to be lashed down – dictated she should be sold for breaking up.

On September 20 every year, there is a memorial service at the little church in the village of Fittleton in Wiltshire, a few miles north of Salisbury, for the 12 victims of the incident.

This year the service will take place on Sunday September 18 at 3pm, while on Tuesday September 20 at 7.30pm there will be a commemoration at HMS President.

For more details contact the Ton Class Association Secretary Peter Down on 01449 721235 or email him at peter.avoca@talktalk.net



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closing date for nominations 30th September



National Recognition for the Armed Forces Community

Who do you know

Wellbeing on Network agenda

A CONFERENCE at HMS Collingwood next month aims to demonstrate the benefits of health and wellbeing in the workplace.

The annual conference of the Naval Servicewomen's Network (NSN) builds on the group's mission to "share, inspire and empower", and the event will showcase the range and depth of support and opportunities available within the Naval Service.

Organisers are keen to see as wide a range of participants as possible.

NSN is a professional network for women in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Maritime Reserves and Royal Fleet Auxiliary, which was established to promote an inclusive culture in the Royal Navy.

Studies of businesses regularly highlight the fact that equality in the workplace – including gender and ethnicity – can have a dramatic improvement on efficiency and effectiveness.

Thus a workforce in which individuals feel valued and comfortable can reasonably be expected to retain staff and encourage and enable individuals to achieve their potential.

The NSN was also created to provide a positive contribution to the shaping of future personnel policy.

With the Network established, it is important that it does not become an inward-looking organisation, preaching to the converted.

For that reason, the conference is open to all serving personnel – women and men – and Civil Servants, including those in the Army and RAF.

Furthermore, personnel attending the conference are strongly encouraged to bring along a boss or 'gender advocate' along with them to improve their understanding of the aims of the network.

The theme of the gathering, which will take place on October 5, is based on health, fitness and wellbeing.

A series of talks, workshops and presentations by those within the Service as well as sponsors and external guests will explore the clear correlations between being healthier and the benefits for professional performance both individually and within the wider workplace.

Areas which are expected to feature include fitness, nutrition, sporting opportunities and aspects of physical and mental health.

The day will start with registration of delegates at 8.30am, and first on the agenda will be a high-profile inspirational speaker, who will be followed by a series of Naval speakers who will share some of their experiences and take part in a question-and-answer session.

Workshops will focus on areas of key professional development.

The afternoon session will cover fitness and health, featuring interactive stands to highlight the sports, nutrition and health information available within the Service.

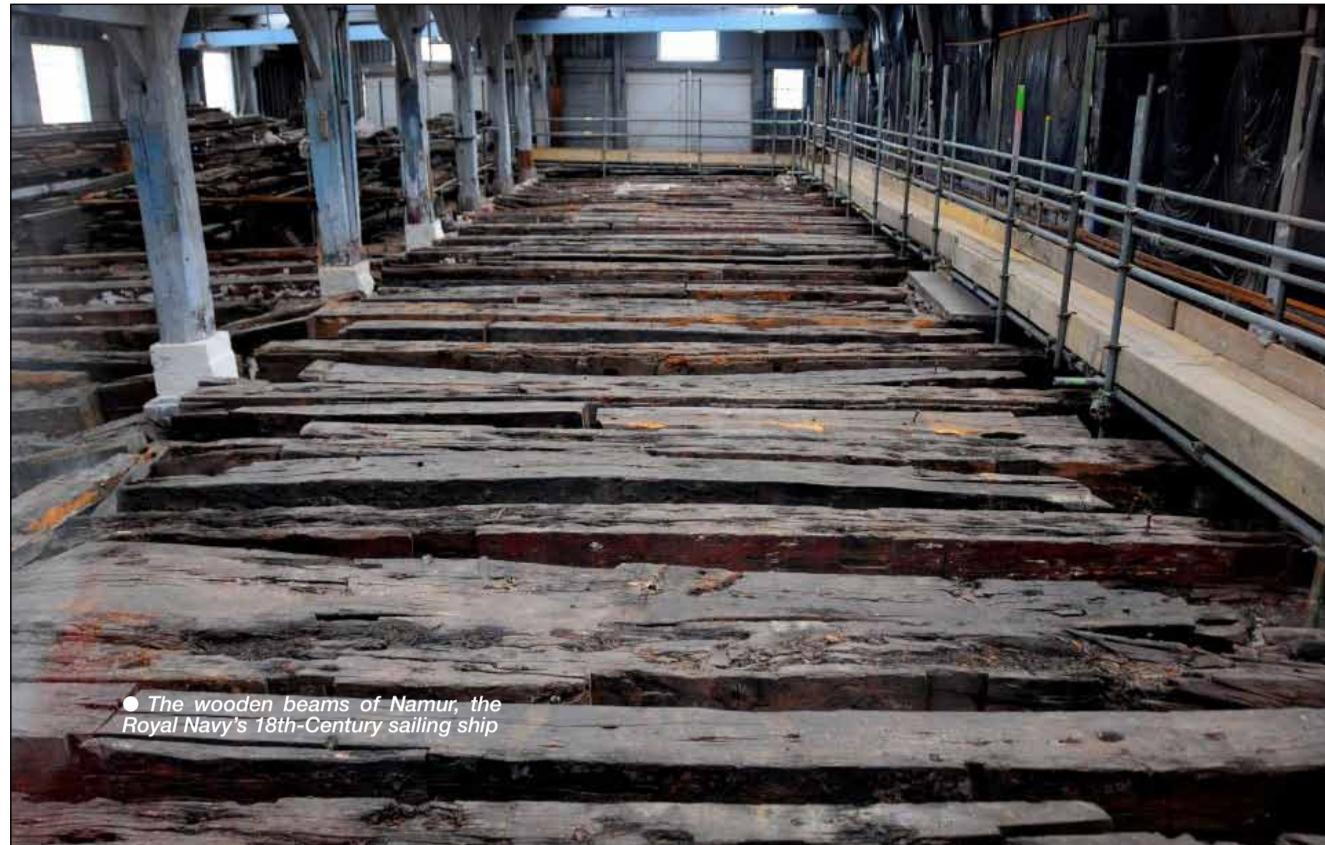
Throughout the day there will be time to discuss relevant issues and topics with other delegates, as well as networking opportunities.

The event should end around 4pm, and delegates are welcome to attend all or any part of the day. A detailed programme will be available nearer the time.

Applications must be made by Friday September 16, and the relevant form is available as an annex to RNTM 250/16.

<http://defenceintranet.dif.r.mil.uk/Organisations/Orgs/Navy/Community/Networks/Pages/NavalServicewomensNetwork.aspx>

See @Navy_Women on Twitter



● The wooden beams of Namur, the Royal Navy's 18th-Century sailing ship

Take a bough, Namur

A TECHNOLOGICALLY-advanced ship built in sections and carefully assembled like a giant model kit.

A service life of more than four decades.

A clear symbol of intent on the part of the Royal Navy.

But not, in this case, the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers being built on the Forth.

This is the Namur, a groundbreaking 18th-Century sailing ship built at Chatham which forms the centrepiece of a new series of galleries at Chatham Historic Dockyard.

The timbers of the 74-gun man o'war (she started as a 90-gun ship but was extensively rebuilt) were discovered under the floor of the Dockyard Wheelwrights' Shop in 1995 during conservation work on the building.

Marks on the wood enabled them to be traced back to the Namur, which was a pivotal vessel during the Age of Sail.

She saw service in three major wars and nine fleet actions, including all the key battles of the period, such as Lagos and Quiberon Bay.

And while her warfighting prowess is part of the exhibition –

HMS Namur

- Built at Chatham Dockyard between 1750 and 1756
- Launched March 3 1756
- Completed August 27 1756
- Build cost £57,284
- Active service of 47 years
- Fought in three wars – Seven Years War (1756-63), American War of Independence (1775-82) and Great French Wars (1793-1815)
- Flagship of several admirals, including Boscawen (1758-9, Capture of Fort Louisburg and battle of Lagos) and Pocock (1762, Capture of Havana)
- Around 25 per cent of the frame of the ship was found beneath a workshop floor in 1995 – described by archaeologists as "the single most important warship discovery in Northern Europe since that of the Mary Rose"

Command of the Oceans – other aspects of her life are used to provide a more rounded picture of the Royal Navy at the time.

The shipbuilding process features prominently, and the Historic Dockyard, though use of audiovisual installations and plenty of imagination, manages to make the subject both accessible and interesting.

Using characters from the dockyard's past, including Master Shipwright Robert Seppings, and locations such as the cavernous Mould Loft, where the patterns or ships were laid out, the importance of innovation is clearly demonstrated.

Supplying stores and equipment for such ships is also covered, and among those whose stories are told is sailor Olaudah Equiano, an African slave who served as a powder monkey in Namur and went on to become a prominent campaigner for the abolition of slavery.

Equiano's autobiography, written in 1789, provides a vivid account of life below deck in an 18th-Century warship.

Namur was later commanded by novelist Jane Austen's brother Charles, who went on to achieve the rank of rear admiral.

By that time Namur had been refitted, and was the first Royal

Navy ship to feature a round bow, a Seppings innovation that was introduced to counter a weakness during battle manoeuvres – when cutting the enemy line of battle the bow and stern of the ship takes a battering from the enemy's broadside.

She was also the first to feature copper sheathing to protect against destructive worms and reduce marine growth on the hull which slowed a ship down – and which gave rise to the term 'copper-bottomed' as an expression of trustworthiness.

Her timbers lie where they were found, with a new gallery built around them to explain their significance.

But the Command of the Oceans galleries are just one part of the experience offered by the Historic Dockyard.

There are three (complete) historic ships to clamber over – wartime destroyer HMS Cavalier, Cold War submarine HMS Ocelot and Victorian sloop HMS Gannet, which was involved in encountering the slave trade – as well as exhibitions showing the yard's industrial and social history.

For more details see <http://thedockyard.co.uk/>

Great War trawler wreck is protected

A SUNKEN Naval trawler has been given protection from plunderers nearly a century after she sank off Dorset.

No one will be able to dive on the recently-discovered wreck of Great War trawler HMT Arfon, lost with ten of her 13-man crew after striking a German mine off St Albans Head in April 1917.

Historians at Historic England feared the wreck of the former fishing vessel – pressed into Royal Navy service at the outbreak of World War I to act as a makeshift minesweeper – could

be plundered by divers.

She lies in about 130ft of water in Weymouth Bay – easily diveable by experienced frogmen – with her stern remarkably intact.

The wreck was located by a local dive firm run by Martin and Bryan Jones, who asked for the site to be protected ahead of the centenary of the sinking next spring, when there will be a commemorative service.

Originally built for the North Sea fishing trade, like hundreds of trawlers the Arfon was taken over by the RN to meet the

demand for patrol vessels.

Based in Portland, the vessel joined other trawlers in sweeping mines from inshore shipping lanes off Dorset for three years before her luck ran out.

Although the mine destroyed the bow and fo'c'sle, the stern of the 120ft trawler is well-preserved, with her minesweeping gear, deck gun, portholes and engine room still intact – unlike many other wrecks of similar vintage, which have been salvaged and plundered.

"The Arfon shipwreck is a rare survivor of a type of vessel once very common around the coastline of Britain but which has now entirely disappeared, surviving only in documents and as wrecks like this one," explained Joe Flatman from Historic England – the advisers to the government on preserving nationally-important objects, buildings, structures and ships.

"Trawlers, minesweepers and other coastal patrol vessels played a crucial role in keeping the sea lanes around the British Isles open during both World Wars – a part of the war effort that is often overlooked."



● Trawler Arfon, taken up as a minesweeper during the Great War

"The crews who served aboard such vessels faced tremendous dangers with unstinting bravery and devotion to duty."

"Historic England is proud to help tell part of this hidden story of naval endeavour during World War I as part of our work."

The Department for Culture Media and Sport agrees with Historic England's assessment of the Arfon and is now safeguarding the site under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973.

Not only is taking anything from the war grave a criminal offence, but no one is permitted



Trenchant is back after refit

THE crew of nuclear-powered hunter killer submarine HMS Trenchant staged a ceremony in Plymouth to mark the vessel's readiness for operations.

Families were also treated to a day out with members of the crew to say thank you for their valued continued support – especially while the submarine is deployed, with little contact with home.

The occasion marked the submarine's reintegration into the fleet after undergoing a maintenance and weapons and sensors upgrade in Devonport Naval Base.

The submarine holds the RN submarine record for a continuous deployment – 11 months in 2013.

A rededication ceremony is a traditional part of any Royal Navy vessel's life after completing a period of refit and improvement. The event was attended by the submarine's sponsor, Lady Meriel Hunt.

Cdr Rob Watts, captain of Trenchant, said: "I have much faith that this finest of crews will see out Trenchant's final chapter with professionalism and pride. It is with much pride I have in showing you off to our sponsor and your families and friends."

The event marks the countdown to when HMS Trenchant is officially available for tasking by the Fleet Commander.

Kirsty Gregory, wife of Radio Engineer Artificer Neil, was joined by their four children Nancy, seven, Lulu, 12, and Owen, 12, at the parade.

Kirsty said: "Trenchant is a very good submarine as far as families are concerned. We get lots of support while they are deployed."

"We are not forgotten and our role in looking after the home and children is appreciated and recognised by the command."

"Having an event like this and visiting the submarine gives the children a chance to understand why daddy goes away."

The crew now begin further training and testing.



● A diver inspects the stern of the sunken trawler HMT Arfon



Our friends in the north

Starring roles for Bulwark during 'home' visits



THE RED Arrows soar above Fleet Amphibious Flagship HMS Bulwark as thousands of spectators flocked to the 28th Sunderland International Air Show.

A spectacular amphibious demonstration from 4 Assault Squadron Royal Marines was one of the highlights of the event, the largest air show held in the north east.

The 30-minute beach landing saw Royal Marines with Viking tracked vehicles arrive on Seaburn Beach via landing craft and move against an 'enemy' artillery position held by members of the 4th Regiment Royal Artillery and The Queen's Own Yeomanry.

The mine-countermeasures vessel HMS Blyth also simulated mine clearance activities off the beach, including an 'underwater explosion'.

Airshow director Sue Stanhope said of the three-day event held off Roker and Seaburn: "I would especially like to thank all of the military personnel who have given so much time and effort, whether they've been in the air, on the beach, at sea or helping in the ground displays."



"There are many, many strong and long links between the military and the people of Sunderland and the North East.

"We all appreciate their hard work, and their dedication to duty and the work they put into making sure that so many people enjoy their visit to Sunderland International Air Show."

Prior to arriving at the air show, 300 sailors and Royal Marines from

Durham and HMS Bulwark and it is with great pride that we welcome the ship's company back to Durham."

PO Nadine Kelly, who had a key role carrying the Colour during the parade, said: "Marching through Durham was a fantastic and memorable experience. The welcome and support we received from the people of Durham was really unforgettable."

Bulwark's CO Capt James Parkin added: "Bringing HMS Bulwark to the North East is always like taking the ship home and the reception was as enthusiastic and welcoming as ever."

"My ship's company were truly overwhelmed. It was a great honour for HMS Bulwark to be presented with the Chairman's Medal by Durham County Council recognising the ship's service to County Durham over the many years of our affiliation."

Bulwark has now returned to Plymouth for a period of leave and, in the autumn, will lead the Royal Navy's Joint Expeditionary Force (Maritime) deployment to the Mediterranean and beyond.

Bulwark will return to the UK before Christmas and hand over her Fleet Amphibious Flagship duties to her sister ship HMS Albion.

Our friends in the south



RELATIVES line the decks of Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship Fort Rosalie to watch demonstrations and displays during what is believed could be the RFA's first families day.

Around 100 loved ones flocked to the ship for a trip around the Weymouth coast to get a taste of what their relatives do while on board.

Youngsters got the chance to don fire suits and have a go at plying water hoses at safety nets – and receive a soaking as the water sprayed back at them.

There was also a set of stocks set up on the flight deck for the children to soak family members which went down well.

The voyage began with a briefing about flags but the younger visitors were much more interested in the deep draught cylinder as it was big enough to hoist them up in.

A tour of the bridge was followed by lunch (pasta, meatballs, salad, sandwiches, soup and an array of puddings) before a man overboard exercise.

Many 'oohs' and 'aahs' were heard as the ship's boat was launched and sped off



to save 'Fred' from drowning – the boat performing a donut as it did so.

The younger visitors were also enamoured by the ship's horn which had to be tested at least 50 times.

Once Fred had been rescued and brought back onboard it was back onto the clearway for a tour of the engine room, a replenishment display and a rope-splicing demonstration.

Visitors were given a briefing on emergency procedures within the life rafts and shown the equipment involved – the

children enjoyed poking their heads out of the vents.

It was then up to the messroom for cupcake decorating while the now-weary parents enjoyed a cup of tea.

The pipe sounded for hands to stations and the visitors made their way back up to 'monkey island' – the observation deck above the bridge – to watch Rosalie make her way back into Portland Harbour accompanied by a tug spraying water.

Before disembarking, the visitors heard from the ship's captain and those aged under 16 were presented with certificates and polo shirts bearing Rosalie's crest.

One of two solid support ships, Rosalie usually carries the explosive and non-explosive stores to support a Royal Marines Landing Force.

Earlier this year she returned to the RFA fleet following a refit in Birkenhead.

Report: L/H(C) Dennis Dodge
Pictures: Lisa Dodge



Your Training Partner



Finmeccanica is now Leonardo - inspired by the vision, curiosity and creativity of the great master inventor - designing the technology of tomorrow.

Leonardo Helicopters deliver the highest standard of OEM training; Comprehensive training for aircrew, maintainers and technicians.

State of the art training environments, including flight simulators, support all phases of training in a cost effective, safe and realistic training environment.



The beach masters

Marines get to grips with Vikings in water and on land

A POPULAR Devon beach in the summer. A favourite with windsurfers and for film locations – particularly for war scenes.

But, apart from the odd dog walker, this stretch of Saunton Sands firmly belongs to the Viking Squadron.

The beach served as a location for the WW2 Anzio landings scenes in Pink Floyd's film *The Wall*, as well as a backdrop for the cover of their 1987 album, *A Momentary Lapse of Reason*. It also doubled as the Normandy beaches in the 2014 Tom Cruise film *Edge of Tomorrow*.

So it proved the perfect training ground for Royal Marines learning how to operate the Viking amphibious vehicle.

Saunton, which lies at the mouth of the River Taw estuary, is an area of outstanding natural beauty.

But it was at the northern end of Saunton where the Vikings landed, on a stretch of beach designated as a military training area.

Saunton served as the filling in the sandwich of the training, which also took place in the River Tamar and culminated on Salisbury Plain.

Sixteen ranks from Viking Squadron and 40 Commando have spent seven weeks on the Armoured Support Class 3 course, run out of Bovington Barracks in Dorset.

The course aims to teach commandos how to drive and command the Vikings in rivers, the sea and on land as well as how to use the vehicle's mounted

weapons systems.

The final phase of the course, which took place near Netheravon on Salisbury Plain, saw crews put their newly-acquired skills to the test in contact drills, dealing with disabled Vikings, track changes and cross-country driving.

OC of the Viking Squadron Maj Tom Scott said: "When you mention Viking people often think solely about the vehicle.

"However, the Viking capability is only made possible through the high-calibre marines we train to operate them.

"Armoured Support marines have a significant and crucial responsibility and therefore require initiative, tactical aptitude and maturity, particularly as they will be expected to operate in any

environment.

"The course trains them for this role, teaching them to drive, maintain and fight the vehicle ready to take up their place at the heart of 3 Commando Brigade's battle-winning capability."

The course concentrates on the core skills of armoured support – vehicle maintenance, driving, gunnery, non-tidal and signals, tidal and mobility, and tactical employment.

The newly-trained drivers and commanders will now join Viking Squadron in Bovington, a dedicated Royal Marines sub unit of Commando Logistic Regiment.

The 167-strong squadron contains three troops of 16 vehicles, which can increase to 20 with the addition of a mortar section.

The squadron also has its own trials and training unit, along with a support troop of mechanics, signallers, drivers, armourers, medics, stores accountants and clerical staff.

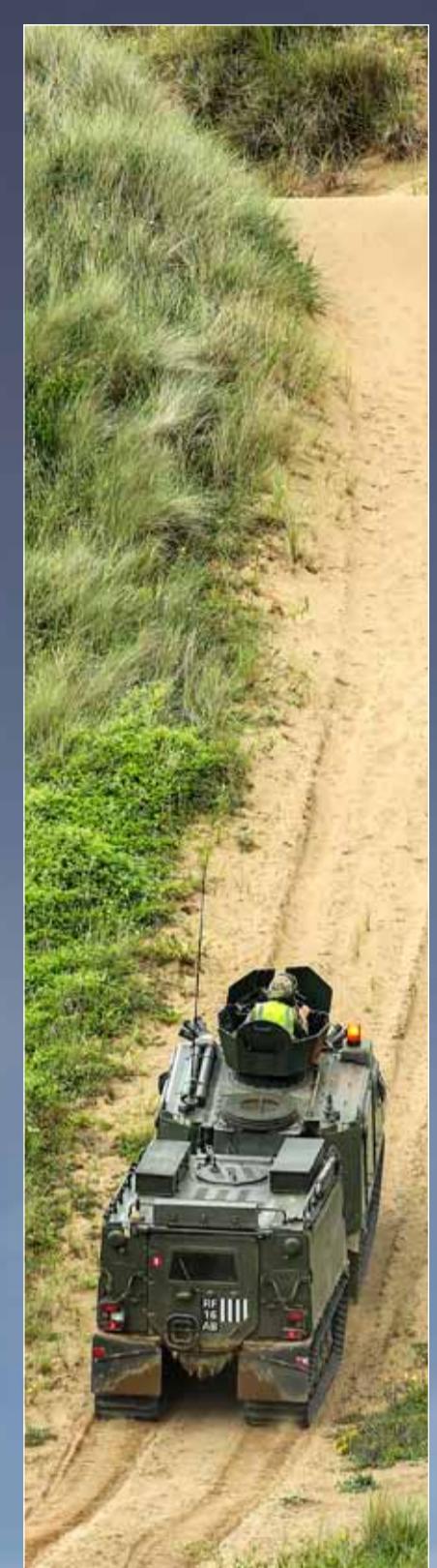
Two of the troops are on five days' notice to deploy anywhere in the world at anytime, with the third troop on 28 days' notice.

Maj Scott added: "The Viking is designed to operate in any environment, from the arid desert to the frozen arctic – and has done so with great success.

"All those who have passed the course have demonstrated the necessary aptitude and should be congratulated on their achievements."

Report and pictures: LPhot Joel Rouse





Reward for duty to RBL

A SENIOR rating from HMS Sultan has been rewarded for his charity work with the 2016 Fuellers Award.



P O A E T Steven Munday, pictured left, has been a key player in London Poppy Day since 2012.

Every year he leads trainees and members of HMS Sultan to represent the establishment at London Poppy Day.

As a direct result of his passion and enthusiasm for the cause and excellent organisational skills, the team has increased from 30 to 80 personnel, and has been credited with raising over £1m.

Supporting the Royal British Legion further, POAET Munday also organised the launch of the 2015 Isle of Wight Poppy Appeal with a tri-Service Field Gun parade through Newport.

He was also awarded £500 to his charity of choice at a ceremony and chose the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal to benefit.

The award is sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Fuellers.

Advice in one place

A DEDICATED website has launched that makes it quick and easy for members of the Armed Forces community in Devon to access key services including health, financial and welfare.

The Devon Forces Family website is an online directory of services and support for military Service leavers, veterans, reservists and their families living in the Plymouth and Torbay areas of Devon.

RBL Ivybridge branch chairman Dermot Roberts (ex WOCOXN(SM)) said: "I left the Royal Navy four years ago after 35 years' service and although I knew that there was lots of support out there, I found it incredibly hard to find."

"I wasn't homeless or penniless so I was ok but there is no follow-up and leavers are not asked how they are coping either socially or mentally and there was no obvious place to look."

"This website changes that, for the first time in one place there is everything you could think of in the way of support covering all the subjects required."

Visit the website at www.devonforcesfamily.org.uk

Top job for Dame Vera

WAR-TIME entertainer Dame Vera Lynn is the first-ever female ambassador for SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity.

Dame Vera, 99, said: "I am very proud to have been offered the role of honorary ambassador for SSAFA. I have always been passionate about supporting our Servicemen and women and I'm so pleased that my role in WW2 and beyond has been recognised in such a delightful way."

SSAFA provides lifelong support to anyone who is currently serving or has ever served in the Royal Navy, British Army or Royal Air Force.

For more information visit www.ssafa.org.uk and follow them on Twitter @SSAFA



Duo turn up the heat in Iceland

TWO sailors have completed a 58km charity trek over Iceland to raise funds for the Royal British Legion.

LH Deborah Jepson 27, who is based in Lisbon, and AB Robin Hayes, 24, from Devonport, have raised nearly £5,000 for the charity.

They have completed a number of fundraising events in the past year, including sky dives, bake sales, bike rides and car boot sales.

To help boost their fundraising please visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/deborah-rabie or www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Robin-Hayes91

CHF help cats, dogs and kids

THIS is not CSI CHF, but commando fliers and ground crew getting stuck in to help a Somerset animal charity.

Two dozen personnel from 846 Naval Air Squadron took a day out of their demanding conversion course learning to fly or maintain the state-of-the-art Merlin Mk3 helicopter by volunteering to help Bath Cats and Dogs Home.

The charity takes in five newly-abandoned or unwanted animals every day – and, despite its title, not just cats and dogs, but also rabbits, gerbils, guinea pigs, even snakes and budgies.

The military men and women split into two groups, one to repaint the perimeter fence (hence the see-through overalls in the picture), before jet washing, weeding and strimming the dog exercise areas.

The second group was given the glamorous task of weeding the entrance and car park of the home, as well as shovelling over a ton of woodchip a distance of six feet.

Once they had finished, the sailors were given the opportunity to take two pairs of dogs out for a walk in the grounds surrounding the site, before returning to socialise with the feline residents.

"The home was incredibly grateful for the hard work put in by the team and are looking forward to more military groups visiting in the future," said pilot



Lt Andy Charlton.

Not to be outdone on the CHF good deeds front were Wildcat personnel from 847 NAS, plus their sister Army Air Corps Squadron 661 (who fly the identical variant of the helicopter), in the Arizona desert.

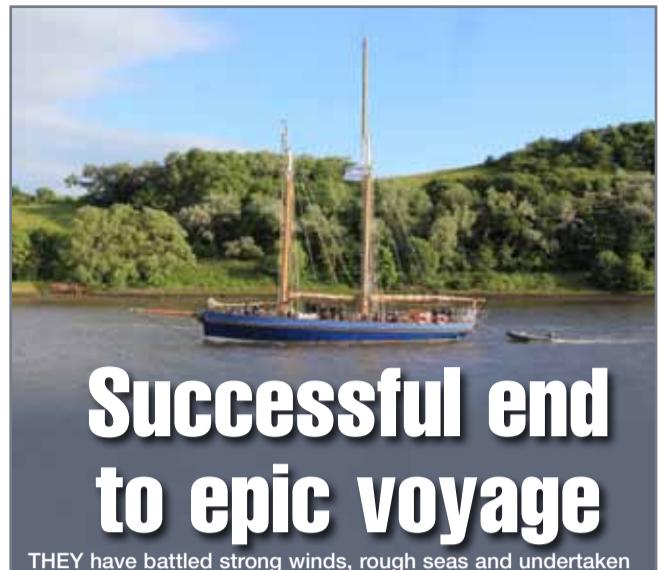
They took a break from hot-weather trials and training with the new aircraft to drop in on Yuma Community Food Bank.

Over one third of children in the city have no idea where their next meal is coming from – so the food bank is vital. It's visited more than 200,000 times a year

by locals in desperate need of food.

Sailors and soldiers dropped in on the centre with boxes of food they didn't need – plus a bike the fliers had been using to get around their temporary US home – and also joined children enjoying a slap-up summer meal.

Also present – and probably recognised far more by the Yuma youngsters – was Big Red, the 6ft 4in feathered mascot of the Arizona Cardinals American football team, who made the 150-mile trip from his stadium in Phoenix.



Successful end to epic voyage

THEY have battled strong winds, rough seas and undertaken hours of complex repairs when their engine gave up on them.

And now a team of adventurers are celebrating reaching the finish line of a 2,000-mile epic voyage.

Three crews set sail from Falmouth on board the Spirit of Falmouth, a 92-ft tall ship and two support yachts on the Turn to Starboard Round Britain Challenge.

After spending two months sailing in an anti-clockwise direction around the British Isles, a team of military veterans sailed into Falmouth in Cornwall.

The gruelling expedition was organised by Turn to Starboard founder and former RAF squadron leader Shaun Pascoe.

It aimed to help participants gain new skills while raising awareness of the challenges some veterans face after leaving the military.

He said: "Our incredible crew has overcome significant challenges along the route and has shown resilience in every situation."

Teams of 38 veterans – many with little or no sailing experience – have taken part in the epic voyage, which is also supported by the Endeavour Fund.



Centenary party

PRINCESS Alexandra chats to military veteran Martin Sutcliffe at the centenary dinner of the Royal Star & Garter Homes charity.

The Princess has been the charity's president for more than 50 years and her grandmother Queen Mary was first patron and founder.

Following a drinks reception held in the Imperial War Museum's WW2 galleries, accompanied by music from The Corps of Drums of HM Royal Marines Band Portsmouth, guests sat down to dinner seated

amongst museum exhibits, including a Battle of Britain Spitfire, a Harrier jet and a German V2 rocket.

Keen supporter of the charity, L/Cpl Matthew Croucher, who was awarded the George Cross in 2008, was among the guests.

The Armed Forces were represented by Lt Gen Richard Nugee, Chief of Defence People, and members of all three Services.

The evening raised over £50,000 towards the cost of providing specialist care to disabled veterans.

Fun in field for families

Discount to survive

A ROYAL Navy event held in Berwick St John, Wiltshire, generated £2,100 for the Soldiers, Sailors, Air Force, and Families Association (SSAFA).

The cheque was presented by Sir Robin Ross, former chairman of SSAFA for ten years.

Fun In the Field is a weekend event for Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel both serving and veterans.

It featured bands, charity stands, refreshments and camping.

Next year's event will be held in Berwick St John from August 25 to 28.

Anyone wanting more details and to book tickets in advance should email: info@funinthefield@gmail.com

BEAR Grylls Survival Race is offering 50 per cent discount to all Royal Navy and Royal Marines Service personnel entering themselves or their families onto the BG Survival Races.

There are four races this year in Cambridge, Edinburgh, Manchester and London.

Check out the race and the discount at www.beargryllssurvivalrace.com

When booking use discount code: forces, which entitles the bearer to 50 per cent off all BG Events including:

- 5,10 & 30K Bear Grylls Survival Races
- BG Kids races (ages 4-11)
- BG Outdoor Festival

Supporting Children

of Royal Navy and Royal Marines (serving and ex-serving) who are IN NEED, HARSHSHIP or DISTRESS



The only charity dedicated to supporting children whose parents work, or who have worked in the Naval Service

Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

Charity registration No. 1160182

A random trot through naval history

PROFESSOR John Hattendorf is one of the most distinguished naval historians and maritime strategists in the world.

In light of his impending retirement (that was in fact delayed) a conference was held in Oxford in April 2014, writes Prof Eric Grove.

The conference's dedicatee did his doctorate at Oxford in the 1970s – resigning from a promising career as an officer in the US Navy to do so. Before the decade was out he had found a new home as a civilian academic at the Naval War College at Newport Rhode Island, where he became Ernest J King Professor of Maritime History in 1984.

His many publications are listed in a 29-page bibliography at the back of the collected papers of the conference, published this year by the Boydell Press as *Strategy and the Sea: Essays in Honour of John B Hattendorf* (£70 ISBN 978-1-78327-098-9).

The book is a classic 'Festschrift' with no fewer than 21 chapters by a range of authors from 11 countries. A certain Oxford bias is apparent with at least seven of the authors having spent some time at the university as research students and/or research fellows. Three of these were the editors, J Ross Dancy (whose groundbreaking DPhil thesis was published as *The Myth of the Press Gang*, reviewed in these pages a few months ago), Benjamin Darnell (a DPhil candidate) and Evan Wilson, whose DPhil was completed last year. They worked under the supervision of Prof Nicholas Rodger, now a Senior Research Fellow at All Souls as he completes his magisterial *Naval History of Britain*. He contributed

THE GROVE REVIEW

both a short tribute to Professor Hattendorf as a preface and a brief 'afterword'.

The editors had a difficult job – as they admit in their introduction. The diverse papers reflected the 'nature and breadth' of Professor Hattendorf's studies which presented a 'challenge' to the editors as they attempted "to draw out some common themes." They found intellectual guidance in Professor Freedman's definition of strategy: "how to think actions in advance, in the light of our goals and capabilities." They argue that the offerings in the book encompass all three elements of Freedman's definition.

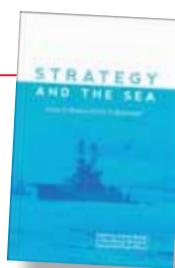
This allows pieces on such varied topics as Spanish galley captains in the 16th and 17th Centuries; strategy as seen by 18th-Century French naval officers; Dutch and Danish flag disputes in the Channel; a reconsideration of the extent of the adoption of a *guerre de course* strategy (the attack on maritime trade) as an alternative to fleet operations under Louis XIV; the lower deck and officer manpower problems of the 18th and early 19th-Century Royal Navy (Dancy's and Wilson's specialisms); the roles and missions of the 17th and 18th-Century Dutch Navy.

In an important paper Roger Knight authoritatively demonstrates the often-neglected importance of the defensive elements in British naval strategy in the Napoleonic period, notably the importance of convoy and escort. Then, Spanish historian Austin Guimera-Ravina

gives a typically robust account of the offensive aspects of Spanish naval strategy from 1763 to 1808. He argues that Spanish operations in the American War – notably against Gibraltar – while not necessarily successful in themselves, diverted British strength away from other theatres contributing to British territorial losses that gave Spain leverage in the peace negotiations to recover Florida and Minorca.

The link to more modern periods is a comparative piece by Paul Kennedy, author of the classic *Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, on the role of sea power in the global wars of 1793-1815, 1914-1918 and 1939-1945.

This piece looks a little old fashioned in its sources and analysis. It underestimates the importance of the sea in WW1. How else were the Allied armies on the decisive Western Front gathered and supplied, except by sea? How else was France that had lost its industrial areas and coal mines kept in the war, except by sea? The blockade was indeed slow to act, but it did have great effect in 1917-18 once its greatest opponent, the USA, came into the war. The Grand Fleet may not have destroyed the High Sea Fleet but its existence acted as the core of the command of the sea that lay at the heart of the victory on land of the Allied and associated Powers. In his analysis of World War 2, Prof Kennedy also understates the importance of Western sea power in diverting German



strength from the Eastern Front and the importance of Western supplies to the USSR, most of which came by sea.

Prof Seligmann's offering on battle cruisers is surprisingly good, passing briefly over his idiosyncratic conviction that they were built primarily to sink armed German liners and, instead, discussing the interesting but abortive 1914 plans to form mixed groups of battle-cruisers and light cruisers for forward use in the North Sea.

George Peden next authoritatively and critically analyses the Royal Navy's role in British grand strategy 1937-41, with some salient points about how too great a concentration on bombers for the RAF led to naval weaknesses with very little initial return.

Werner Rahn then provides an interesting German view on 'The Atlantic in the Strategic Perspective of Hitler and his Admirals, 1939-1944.'

Dr Tim Benbow looks at the role of the battleship and aircraft carrier in British strategy from the wartime years to the early 1950s, and Peter Brobst follows with a discussion on naval arms control proposals in the Indian Ocean in the 1970s (a slightly jarring piece chronologically that does not make best use of its author's undoubtedly skills).

Prof Andrew Lambert follows with a very well-informed paper on Sir Julian Corbett and the origins of the latter's *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*. Dr Duncan Redford then reviews

'The Influence of Identity on Sea Power' with some interesting discussion of why "the British stopped believing that the security conferred by sea power and their navy was important to them."

The final chapters cover the relationship of the Oxford academic Spenser Wilkinson and Admiral Sims and teaching at the Naval War College and 'Naval Intellectualism and the Japanese Navy' in its formative years.

A typically stimulating, if short and discursive, piece on 'History and Navies, Defining a Dialogue' by Admiral James Goldrick (sometime Research Fellow at All Souls) makes several good points, notably that in-fighting

among naval historians does little to improve their wider influence.

Finally Prof Geoffrey Till makes some useful points based on his great experience on 'Teaching Navies Their History'.

The book comes over as something of a pot pourri, containing some important material but lacking a certain focus.

Its editing might have been improved if someone with interests in more modern periods had been involved.

Readers, depending on their interests, could gain much from individual papers but I am not sure I can recommend investing a not-inconsiderable £70 for the whole collection.

Jutland once more

YES, but this time from the other side of the North Sea haze.

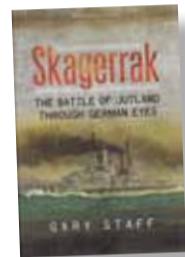
Gary Staff has written several excellent books on WW1 at sea from the German perspective and, for the 100th anniversary of Jutland, has turned his attention to the High Seas Fleet in that battle, *Skagerrak* (Pen and Sword, £25 ISBN 978-1783-831234).

With the exception of a smattering of accounts left with the IWM, the German view of the titanic clash has been viewed mostly through the eyes of Commander-in-Chief Scheer and gunnery officer Georg von Hase, who compiled early post-war memoirs which were quickly translated into English.

But in the immediate aftermath of the battle, hundreds of officers and men were asked to record their impressions, experiences and lessons of the clash – accounts unearthed and translated into English by the author for a much more rounded view of Jutland/Skagerrak.

"All hell is loose," a junior officer on the battle-cruiser Lützow wrote as the ship was hit repeatedly by British shells (she would be abandoned during the night). "Bursting shells, howling splinters, steel on steel, humming transverse bulkheads, impacts without end. The whole hull trembled and vibrated."

Such lively accounts pepper Staff's book, making it a refreshing, new and very worthy addition to the rich oeuvre on Jutland.



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**It's been
46 years
since my
last tot**

THE 46th anniversary of Black Tot Day took place on July 31 and I write this while on Caribbean patrol onboard RFA Wave Knight.

I am probably one of the last persons still at sea who actually drew their tot.

I reached my 20th birthday (minimum age to draw a tot) on December 30 1969, and so enjoyed my tot for seven months and two days.

My first 'legal' tot was while ship's company at HMS Excellent. As a L/Sea QR2, I worked on the farm (now the car park beyond the main gate, past the causeway).

At the farm, along with AB Jimmy Ambrose (we are both friends on Facebook), we looked after two horses Dolly and Charlie, a pony (whose name escapes me) and 3,000 chickens.

Each weekday I would hitch Dolly to a cart and travel round Whale Island delivering eggs, and transferring bedding between the laundry and the bedding store.

When passing the drill shed she would automatically break into a gallop that I was unable to control. She would slow down at the sailing centre near the Royal Yacht berth, turn around and gallop back.

I was regularly summoned to the Reg Office for speeding and had to explain to the Master at Arms that I wasn't doing it deliberately.

At 11.30 I would go to the junior rates' dining hall to get my tot. I'd present my monthly tot card to be punched.

My oppo did the punching and would always punch the previous day's hole, leaving that day intact.

At 16.00 I would go to the victualling store where my card would be punched correctly, and I got my second tot of the day.

In the spring of 1970, I was drafted to HMS Cleopatra, which was in refit at Devonport, and accommodated at HMS Drake. It was at Drake on that sad day July 31 1970 I gulped down my last tot.

I will be hanging up my steaming bats in October after my current four-month deployment island hopping in the Caribbean, and sloping off into retirement. Happy days.

Phil Symes
RFA Wave Knight

Delivering details of war-prize ship

RE: Annette Robinson's letter in the June edition of Navy News.

I also have a copy of the photograph of the crew of HMS Diver but am able to name all of those pictured.

The photograph appeared in a Christmas card sent by the ship sometime between 1954 and 1956.

HMS Diver was launched on April 7 1943 as C.28, a German boom defence and mining tender. She was acquired by the Royal Navy as a war prize in 1945 and commissioned as Diver in 1948.

She had a team of clearance divers embarked and served as a mine location vessel attached to the 1st Minesweeping Experimental Flotilla – later the 50th Minesweeping Flotilla – based at HMS Lochinvar, Port Edgar, on the south side of the Forth.

Sometime around 1960 she was sent to Singapore where she was employed as a diving tender by the Far East Clearance Diving Team until her sale in 1971.

Sadly, another of the crew members in the photograph, Acting PO(D), later Lt, Alan J 'Nutty' Carr died in April this year.

You can find more details on www.mcdoa.org.uk where you will find many mentions and photographs of the late Lt Cdr 'Uncle Bill' Filer, the CO of HMS Diver.

I had the privilege of knowing him right up until his death in January 2011.

Lt Cdr Rob Hoole
Vice Chairman Mine warfare and Clearance Diving Officers' Association



● Left: Lt Cdr Rob Hoole, second right, joined Lt Cdr Bill Filer, far right, and friends for lunch in 2010, a year before the former CO of HMS Diver passed away



Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tipple to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is Lt Cdr Rob Hoole



● Top: HMS Diver conducting diving operations; Left: The photograph of the crew formed the inside of the ship's Christmas Card; Below: The front of the card;



Whisky fell into harbour

MANY years ago I was a Naval stores rating in HMS Perseus, sailing from the UK to points east and Korea with all sorts of stores and supplies on board.

We anchored in the outer harbour of Aden on Christmas Day 1942 and I was on the flight deck lowering stores into a tender.

The last to come up from below were cases of whisky and beer.

The cases were loaded into the cargo net which was then gently lowered over the side.

Sure enough, a case of fine whisky happened to fall off and sink into the harbour.

I wonder if it is still there? If it is it would be very drinkable and valuable.

My whisky-drinking friends say that the salt water should not have been able to enter the bottles but I am not so sure.

If anyone finds a bottle please send me one.

I am not suggesting in any way that divers, young or old, are fond of the drink.

Noel McKinstry
(RN 1949-57)
Canada

Capt Fryatt's two watches

I READ with interest the recent article in July's edition of *Navy News* on Capt Charles Fryatt.

I have just published a book on the story, which gives rise to a few comments.

There were in fact two watches. The first was awarded to Fryatt following the Wrexham incident and the second after Fryatt tried to ram U-33 with the Brussels.

It is certain that neither watch was used as evidence at the trial, as they were both in the safekeeping of Mrs Fryatt.

Nevertheless the Germans probably knew about them through their intelligence network.

The pension awarded to Mrs Fryatt was £250pa, which I calculate to be worth somewhere between £24,000 and £25,000 today.

Surprisingly there is no mention of the centenary of Fryatt's execution on July 27.

Your readers may be interested in my book *Captain Charles Fryatt - Courageous Mariner of the First World War*, published by Amberley.

Ben Carver
Dorset

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I was shoved overboard

IN 1953 the Home Fleet Clearance Diving Team were returning from the Norfolk Broads at Oulton after a week of demonstrations in the swimming baths and on the Broads.

We left harbour and headed out to sea towing our 32ft Kitchener gear cutter on about a five-fathom towline; there was a boat keeper to handle the steering.

As we got further from land the weather suddenly worsened and it got very rough.

I said to the Chief Diver that I didn't like the look of it and I went back to the bridge and brought back one of the lifebuoys.

As I arrived back at the stern the MFV was hit by a strong squall, the cutter broached to one side and took a green one into the boat.

It then swung the other way and a wave filled it up to the gunnels and it went straight down. The boat keeper found himself in the sea wearing several sweaters, an oilskin and waders and watching the life jacket that he should have been wearing floating away.

I threw the life belt out towards him and dived off the stern. I say I dived off but I

have a sneaking feeling that my Chief shoved me over the side.

As I went full astern I can remember to this day the large brass screw beating right alongside me as I swam as fast as I could.

Luckily the Chief yelled out and got the screw stopped. I reached the boat keeper who was looking very unhappy and thrust the lifebelt in his hands.

They finally picked us up. I had dumped my clothes and as I climbed aboard the skipper told me off for coming on improperly dressed and to get dressed and report to him in his cabin. When I did there was a bottle of whisky and three glasses – I can't remember the rest.

Some months later I was sent aboard HMS Tyne and presented with a Commander of the Nore commendation.

Even after all these years I still have a sneaky feeling that my Chief, who crossed the bar last year bless his heart, did shove me over the side.

Jim Cannon
West Sussex

Fab four still going strong

THERE are still former Royal Navy members of the British Pacific Fleet of WW2 'The Forgotten Fleet' who returned to Australia or stayed here at the end of war in August 1945.

I served in HMS King George V and I am one of four known crew members residing here in Australia.

The others are George Haynes, 93, Jim Page, 92 and Pat O'Shaughnessy, 90. I am also 90.

I also served in HMS Duke of York, Diadem, and Mauritius from 1947-48 and then Indomitable, Ceylon, and Terror in Singapore up until 1954.

I then served in the Dainty and Scarborough up to 1961, followed by Tamar in Hong Kong and Verulam until I got my pension in 1966.

If there are any old timers out there who may recall myself or the ships mentioned, please contact me at les@bower.net.au or visit my blog www.dailyyaggle.com.

Les Bowyer
New South Wales, Australia

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and full address, not necessarily for publication. If you submit a photograph which you did not take please ensure you have permission to use it. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions.



Choir's tribute at Ypres icon

THIRTY military wives from Portsmouth paid homage to Great War fallen when they performed at the iconic Menin Gate in Ypres.

The ladies, all members of Portsmouth Military Wives' Choir, were invited to sing at the world-famous Last Post ceremony, a nightly ritual in the Belgian city for nearly 90 years.

The gate acts as a cenotaph for more than 54,000 Commonwealth soldiers who died in the Ypres sector between 1914 and 1918 but whose bodies were never identified.

Ever grateful for the sacrifices made by those men – and thousands more – in Flanders, locals pay tribute at 8pm daily with a service of commemoration under the gate's imposing main arch.

Led by musical director Andrew Cleary, the choir – one of 80 such groups across the UK's

Personnel development

THE Defence School of Personnel Administration is offering a BSc (Hons) in Human Resource Management in partnership with the University of Lincoln and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

All commissioned and non-commissioned officers working in personnel administration in the Forces role will have the opportunity to join the degree programme.

Participants will be able to complete their trade training with the military before finishing their studies for a degree at the university via work-based distance learning.

After completing a final year 'top-up' degree programme, participants will graduate with a bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management, with the option to gain professional certification as an associate member of the CIPD.

Fun for veterans

A GROUP of Service veterans proved that having limited or no sight is no barrier to sport at the HMS Sultan Blind Veterans UK Summer Camp Sports Day.

Every year, blind veterans from across the UK head to the Hampshire Naval engineering training establishment in order to take part in an eight-day summer camp.

Basketball, hockey and penalty taking were among the many activities on offer.

This year marked the camp's 20th year within HMS Sultan after the event moved across to the establishment along with air engineering training in 1996.

military community – performed three pieces at the ceremony (*Prayer of the Children*, *Amazing Grace* and the national anthem), watched by thousands of people before choristers Margaret Pugh and Suzanne Bull laid a wreath.

The short ceremony at the Menin Gate was the musical and emotional high point of the visit to Ypres, but it was not the sole performance.

The singers also gave a free lunchtime concert at St Martin's Cathedral – 13 songs in all, including *Wherever You Are* (the Christmas No.1 in 2011 when performed by the original Military Wives' Choir) with the acoustics in the house of worship powerfully adding to the music.

The final stop on the short visit was Tyne Cot cemetery, the largest Commonwealth War Graves burial ground in the world; nearly 12,000 souls, most victims of the terrible Passchendaele offensive in 1917, have found peace here.

The choir stopped those visiting the graves in their tracks with an impromptu performance of *For the Fallen*.

"It is not until you stand here, amongst so many graves, that you truly feel the emotion captured in the words of this famous poem," said Lt Cdr Marie Whitehouse, who works at the Navy's HQ on Whale Island.

"The ladies decided to sing this piece here, as their own way of paying respects to those that gave the ultimate sacrifice."

"And it was both an honour and a humbling experience for the choir to take part in the Menin Gate ceremony to remember those that made the ultimate sacrifice during the Great War."

You can watch the choir's performance at the Menin Gate at www.facebook.com/PortsmouthMilitaryWivesChoir/videos/1106915922722371/

Where to look

DINS

2016DIN07-102 BSc (Hons) Degree in Human Resource Management
2016DIN03-029 Contact with the Media and Communicating in Public
2016DIN09-014 The General Service Medal 2008 (GSM 08) with Eastern Africa Clasp for Operation Verditer (Operation Presidium)

DIBS

2016DIB/27 Updated Ministerial Portfolios and Private Office Contacts

RNTM

245/16 Introduction of the lock-off tag-out (LOTO) system
243/16 Clarification of NS policy on mess membership and entitlement to public subsidy at official mess functions
238/16 Royal Navy corporate gifting policy
233/16 Divisional training in RN

Clankies, techies, tiffies, bakeries...

"The thing about 179th birthdays is... they only come around once, so you'd better celebrate them in style."

From Wildcats to Warrior, the Arizona desert to sun-drenched Devonport, all three engineering arms in the Royal Navy put down their tools and celebrated the birth of their branch for an inaugural, RN-wide celebration.

The RN's engineering world has had a tough time in the past couple of years, so to help nurture the branch ethos, the MEs, WEs and AEs on **HMS Monmouth** decided they should mark the anniversary – then spread the word.

So at Stand Easy on July 19, spanners, wrenches, screwdrivers, toolkits were downed and cuppas and cake knives raised pretty much across the RN.

The Engineering Support Division in Portsmouth didn't have an engine room of their own, so they borrowed that of 1860 ironclad **HMS Warrior** – one of the few examples of the early days of steam in the RN.

HMS Duncan's engineers mustered under the destroyer's propellers in dry dock, where a sumptuous cake spread had been laid on (top right).

At sea, **HMS Kent**'s folk had a brew and a sticky on the forecastle. And in the engine room (centre right). And on the flight deck.

In **Bulwark** and **Dauntless**, they raised their mugs down in the bowels (below and bottom right, respectively).

At the US Marine Corps air base in Yuma, Arizona, **847 NAS** technicians and engineers decided it was far too hot for tea or coffee (45°C...). But it's never too hot for cake, enjoyed while one young AET provided a potted history of engineering in the RN.

The ladies decided to sing this piece here, as their own way of paying respects to those that gave the ultimate sacrifice.

"And it was both an honour and a humbling experience for the choir to take part in the Menin Gate ceremony to remember those that made the ultimate sacrifice during the Great War."

You can watch the choir's performance at the Menin Gate at www.facebook.com/PortsmouthMilitaryWivesChoir/videos/1106915922722371/

The ground team also found out that the avionics systems don't like being out in the full blaze of the sun but much prefer being in the hangar.

"The main operating change is the management of our engineers' exposure to the heat – jobs take longer due to the heat and the need to ensure people take regular breaks," explained AEO Lt Cdr Andy Betts.

So cakes at Stand Easy are perfect, then. And for the ship which came up with the birthday celebration, there was delight that so many ships and units supported their fledgling plan.

Having read an excerpt from *The Naval Steam Reciprocating Engine* (a 1989 page-turner by one Norman Rivett – not a made-up name, before you ask) to shipmates, Lt Will Astley said he hoped that July 19 would be celebrated every year by "such a fine cadre of individuals".

He continued: "Stand Easy was an opportunity for engineers from across the Service to take a moment to reflect on the history of their branch and celebrate that rich history – and bright future – in the company of fellow engineers.

"Hopefully in the future there'll be greater awareness of this key date and a tradition formed when engineers get together each year and simply celebrate being engineers."

Until the formal establishment of the Engineering Branch Afloat (barely a month after Queen Victoria became monarch), engineers were recruited directly from works and forges.

As such, they were not sailors, were not subject to Naval laws and discipline and invariably came and went as they pleased – hence the need to create an official branch.

The most junior of the new engineers back in 1837 took home 14s and 6d per month – about £550 today. Today's ETs and AETs earn around £1,510 (before tax) every month once they've completed their engineering training at Collingwood or Sultan.

Fast forward 179 years and Sub Lt Richard 'Gunter' Batten passed out of Collingwood with a new sword courtesy of BAE as this year's best engineering student.

The junior officer, who served as a rating aboard Exeter, Westminster and Defender, was singled out for his efforts on the System Engineering and Management Course.

He's now serving as a deputy weapon engineer officer in the Type 45 refit support group in Portsmouth.



Thumbs up for new aye pod

ENJOYING a summer break in a tiny chalet is LCH Darren Hatfield from Commando Helicopter Force and his wife, Lisa and their four daughters Mya, Megan, Gracie and Lyla.

Nothing unusual – perhaps – except that the Hatfields are taking advantage of a new military-only holiday village in the New Forest.

The wooden chalets or ‘poppy pods’ – each named after a Great War battle – at Tile Barn Outdoor Centre in Brockenhurst can be used for free at weekends (maximum of two nights) or during school holidays (max four nights) if you’re serving or ex-Forces.

You’ll get a fixed folding bed/seating area, a couple of camp beds, lights and a USB socket to charge your phone.

And on site, there are male/female toilets and showers, washing up facilities and fridge and freezer space for labelled items.

Darren found the ‘village’ to be “amazing – we need more please, ideally at beauty spots around the country. One in the Caribbean



Islands would be ideal too!”

His wife added: “The pods are really very well designed, homely and comfortable. I’d like to say a very big thank you for providing these facilities for our important family time together.”

The Duchess of Cornwall performed official opening honours, but the real gratitude rests at the door of the local Royal British Legion who raised £50,000, while the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme donated £250,000.

To book a pod, see www3.hants.gov.uk/tilebarn/tilebarn-poppytods.htm.



Sailors mark Hindu festival

BINDIS are applied to the foreheads of soldiers, sailors and airmen as they join members of Bolton’s Hindu community in celebrating one of the holiest events in their calendar: Raksha Bandhan.

Personnel also received string bracelets, known as rakhi, during the ancient ceremony.

The event at the Shree Krishna Temple was one of a series organised around the country by the Armed Forces Hindu Network, led by Surg Lt Cdr Manish Tayal, the network’s chairman.

There are around 950 regular and 120 reservist Hindus serving across the Armed Forces, while nearly two million Hindus fought for Britain in the two world wars.

“The event is about celebrating common values and a shared heritage, bringing together the Hindu community and the Armed Forces in a bond of friendship, brotherhood, mutual support and protection,” said Lt Cdr Tayal.

Picture: Sgt Jamie Peters, RLC

Naval Families Federation

FAMILIES continue to contact us with some brilliant questions, here are a few that *Navy News* readers may find of interest:

We have lived in Scotland for around two years, but our daughter completed boarding school in England. Is she eligible for funding for college/university?

Funding is given or allocated depending on your child’s age and the level of course they are studying. Further education (up to but not including Higher National Certificate) do not require Students Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) funding and your child may be eligible for a travel bursary.

Higher education (HNC and above) will require an application through SAAS for fees and student loan. To be eligible for funding you must have lived in the UK for the last three years and be an ‘ordinarily resident’ in Scotland (this includes living in Service Family Accommodation) on the relevant date (which is normally the start date of the course).

See www.sfc.ac.uk/funding/colleges/student_support/student_applications_for_funding.aspx or www.saas.gov.uk/forms/funding_guide.pdf.

I’ve applied for SFA in Helston and have been offered a substitute property in Helston through Mears. Before I accept it, how can I find out what the rent will be? The property is a Band D.

Rental charges for SFA and Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA) can be found in the Armed Forces Pay Review Body annual report. See www.nff.org.uk/charges-and-allotments/ for more details.

My partner is deploying soon. I’ve heard that there is a book he can record for our daughter for while he is away?

There is – Storybook Waves records parents reading their child a bedtime story, then adds a soundtrack to make a personalised CD so that each child can listen to their parent’s voice whenever they want. E-mail: info@storybookwaves.org or telephone: 0300 30 20 183.

T-mendous gift to deeps

ONCE they used to stand out because of the infrequency of having a shower.

Now you’ll be able to tell submariners apart thanks to new black T-shirts being issued throughout the Silent Service.

Every qualified submariner – ie wearer of the coveted dolphins – will receive one of 5,200 shirts provided by a charity.

The Greenwich Hospital has funded the design and purchase of 5,200 T-shirts for deeps to don during their three hours of mandatory physical exercise or adventurous training every week.

First deeps to receive the T-shirts were Std Danielle Skinner and AB(WS(SM)) Vincent McCall (pictured above).

“I really like the shirt, it is really light and comfortable. This style of shirt is really fashionable just now – I’ve seen something similar in Topshop,” said Danielle.

Vincent added: “It’s great to have something that visually makes us stand out a bit more from the rest of the fleet.”

The T-shirts are *only* available to serving qualified submariners and are not on sale to former deeps or the wider general public.

Mental health help available

A FREE, confidential mental health service for personnel and their families is being offered by a charity.

The Big White Wall is a health and wellbeing website offering support to UK military personnel, veterans, reservists and their families.

Supported by Help for Heroes, the Ministry of Defence and NHS England, the service is available 24/7.

For details visit www.bigwhitewall.com

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For more information contact:

PSTN- 01929 403172 Mil 94374 3172

E-mail-

navycnr-rnsrtrainingassist@mod.uk



Pupils in finals of field gun

THE Royal Hospital School, Suffolk, entered a young but enthusiastic team into the Junior Leaders Field Gun Competition held at HMS Collingwood in Gosport.

After a week of training and tough competition on the tracks, the boys and girls, aged 16 and 17 years, were part of a closely-fought final against a team of Scottish-based trainee submariners.

Lt Cdr (Retd) Nigel Griffiths QGM, Head of Ceremonial at the school, first ran the Royal Navy Brickwoods Field Gun competition in 1983 and has been an avid competitor and supporter of the Royal Navy competition.

Since 2007, the Junior Leaders Field Gun competition has enabled young men and women between the ages of 16 and 24, both within the Armed Forces and from the wider civilian community, to develop their self-esteem, personal discipline, fitness, and team work ethic.

"Our pupils did superbly and deserved their place in the final against a much older team," said Mr Griffiths. "We will of course be pitching for pole position next year."

For more information about the Royal Hospital School see www.royalhospitalschool.org

Mowbray marching

STAFF and Cadets from Hinckley, Loughborough and South Leicester units along with the band from Grimsby unit took part in HMS Quorn's Freedom of the Borough Parade in Melton Mowbray.

The parade was a great success and cadets received many complimentary remarks from the spectators.

The Mayor of Melton Mowbray also expressed his appreciation for the attendance of both the band and the marching squad.

On the water

CADETS from across Northants and Leicester and from Nottingham unit, accompanied by Lt Cdr (SCC) S Woodward RNR, enjoyed a week offshore aboard TS Jack Petchey.

Sailing from Kings Lynn, they visited Great Yarmouth, Ipswich and Lowestoft.

On the last day aboard, offshore qualifications and badges were presented by the Commanding Officer of TS Jack Petchey.

Great hosting

CADETS from Derby unit visited 162 Regiment RLC at Bilborough in Nottingham.

The cadets were given a tour of the unit and a presentation before taking part in games of pool and table tennis.

The cadets would like to thank Maj Spencer, WO1 Ferguson and all the staff for their hospitality.

Tiger reward

HUGE congratulations from the Northants and Leicestershire District go to Lt (SCC) David Derbyshire RNR, Commanding Officer of Leicester unit, on receiving the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Meritorious and Voluntary Service in the Sea Cadet Corps.

MEMBERS of Penzance Sea Cadets have been praised for helping rescue an unmanned boat which was drifting towards rocks at Penlee Point.

The incident, which happened during Mousehole's Sea Salts and Sail festival, occurred when a Dutch vessel Het Boot broke away from her anchor and started drifting towards the rocks.

Cadets, who were helping at the festival for the weekend and had provided three boats, were first on the scene after they were called by the sailing manager.

Festival organiser Dan Hills, who was on the RIB with PO Matt Bird, said: "The anchor chain had actually snapped and as we got to it, it was about to hit the rocks.

"We very slowly towed it back off the

rocks and Matt, from the Sea Cadets, did a brilliant job. He got me in there and we managed to get a line on just seconds before it hit the rocks."

With the help of a nearby mackerel punt, the cadets held her just as 40ft dipping lugger Happy Return arrived.

Penlee's lifeboat crew then escorted Het Boot back to the safety of Mousehole.

A spokesperson for Penlee RNLI said: "We would like to say a big thank you and well done to Penzance Sea Cadets."

"They quickly attached a tow line from their RIB to the stern of the boat, which was just a few feet away from the rocks, and towed it to a safer position. Their quick thinking and professional approach averted a far more serious incident."

Sailors compete for cup

PORTSMOUTH Sail Training Trust hosted the first HMS Bristol Trophy Regatta finals in Portsmouth Harbour.

The event was a culmination of the summer term's training and race programme.

The series of nine races sailed over two days was between PSTT pupils, all who attend the trust's training programme from Portsmouth's Trafalgar School, St Edmunds and Charter Academy.

The HMS Bristol trophy was presented by Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr David Price.

After two days of intense competition, with teams of pupils sailing seven of the Trust's donated 19ft Squib keelboats, there were three teams heading the overnight leader board - Kacey Ellen Thornton and Evie Mant, Luke Symonds and Nathan Gunnell Jones and Frank Leslie with Tom Wilkinson.

After four races on Friday, and a closely-fought battle, the overall winners emerged as Tom Wilkinson and Frank Leslie from Charter Academy.

Declan Hayes was awarded the most improved sailor trophy by Rear Admiral Paul Bennett.

RNLI say thank you

OXFORD unit has been honoured by the Royal National Lifeboat Institute with the presentation of a plaque recognising the support given to the local branch over the last 25 years.

The unit has always been pleased to help with the RNLI Flag Days over the years, and has hosted RNLI events at their headquarters.

David Parsons, the Oxford RNLI branch chairman, visited the unit and presented the plaque to the Commanding Officer, CPO (SCC) Denise Driver and former Commanding Officer Sub Lt (SCC) Tony Ingham RNR at a unit parade night.

Mr Parsons thanked the unit staff, cadets and supporters for all the assistance they had given them.

Top training



● CCF cadets hit the heights during their Adventurous Training Challenge Camp in Scotland

Pictures: Nigel Huxtable



● (Above) A successful Tyrolean traverse in Scotland; (right) taking charge in the messdeck flood exercise in the DRIU (Damage Repair and Instructional Unit) on the Senior Leadership Course at HMS Raleigh

MEMBERS of the Combined Cadet Force have been testing themselves in a wide range of skills over the course of the summer.

The CCF Adventurous Training Challenge Camp was held in July at Garelochhead and in the Ben Lomond area in Scotland, where cadets undertook a mountain bike, canoe and mountain trek lasting three days.

The trek finished at the falls of Falloch for a Tyrolean traverse (crossing a space using a rope or wire as a bridge), canoe water-based rescue and team challenges.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the

country, HMS Raleigh staged the CCF Senior Leadership Course, where cadets got the chance not only to hone their own kit preparation skills but also to earn to evaluate their fellow cadets' ironing skills.

This will all prepare them for their return to their units where, from this month, a new cadet training syllabus will see senior cadets delivering training to junior cadets and taking responsibility for managing the new lessons too.

Drill now forms an integral part of the course, with cadets devising and evaluating their own drill routines prior to taking responsibility for delivering drill training in their own units.



Trip back to the 1940s

SEA Cadets from Huddersfield took part in a wartime festival when Meltham held their annual 1940s weekend.

The Meltham Memories Wartime Weekend, now in its ninth year, commemorates everything from big band music and vehicles to military uniforms and fashions of the period.

The main procession got under way with a military parade through the village - Meltham and Meltham Mills Brass Band led the parade, followed by Huddersfield & District Army Veterans, Huddersfield Sea Cadets, Army Cadets and Air Cadets, local school children, and a long line of vintage military vehicles.

Dressed in their best 1940s get up, people lined the streets to watch the

impressive parade before enjoying re-enactments, dances and a fly-past by two Spitfires.

PO (SCC) Leon Stansfield said: "The event has enabled us to put the unit in the public eye and let the community know what we do."

"The cadets have enjoyed taking part and have willingly engaged the public, getting them involved in the naming of our new boat."

OC Daniel from TS Highburton said: "I liked parading through the streets though, it made me feel proud when the public applauded as we marched past them."

For more details about the unit visit www.sea-cadets.org/huddersfield/

A charity registered in England and Wales 313013 and in Scotland SC037808



Supporters enable cadets to take to water

SEA Cadets from **Medway Towns** unit take to the water with one of their new Trinity 500 rowing boats.

Two new vessels were named in a ceremony at Chatham with Mrs Brenda Beetham naming one boat Captain Eric in memory of her husband, a former vice president of Medway Towns unit and a longtime supporter of the Marine Society Sea Cadets.

"As a Master Mariner, when he retired

Eric wanted to do something he was interested in and decided on the Sea Cadets," said Mrs Beetham. "Eric would have been thrilled to bits and really honoured."

The Page family, who donated more than £2,000, named the second boat Oliver J Martin. Oliver was a PO Cadet who is now hoping to become a paramedic.

"We wanted to do something to show our appreciation and to give other young

people the opportunities that our son Oliver had," said mum Joyce.

CO of TS Cornwallis Lt (SCC) Buckingham said: "Having these two boats means that we are now able to offer more training opportunities.

"Cadets are able to learn to row on the River Medway and to deal with the tides, wind and river traffic while under the watchful eye of qualified instructors."

Join RN unit to stand out from the crowd Importance of being URNU

AS students prepare to start a new phase of their lives at university, staff at the various University Royal Naval Units are looking to attract new members.

URNUs offer students the chance to obtain qualifications in leadership, develop their overall confidence and the potential to stand out from the crowd when it comes to future employment prospects.

There are currently 14 URNUs recruiting from a number of different universities, with a 15th due to open in Plymouth this year, all training a range of undergraduates in leadership, seamanship and navigation without any obligation to join the Royal Navy.

Each unit has a strong team ethos which is developed through Adventurous Training, sport, time on board a P2000, one of the Royal Navy patrol vessels, and general unit life.

Wales URNU recruits students from Cardiff, Swansea, Cardiff Metropolitan and the University of South Wales and has HMS Express as its P2000.

The URNU has an annual recruitment period in September/October where current cadets attend freshers' fairs to promote the unit to potential new entry students. The number of places available will vary between units but selection is through application and a short interview process.

During the year students get the opportunity to take part in Easter and summer deployments on their affiliated P2000, visiting ports around the UK and Europe.

They embark in a small team and learn seamanship skills, including navigation and general ship-handling. HMS Express completed a tour of Eastern Europe this summer, including visits to Amsterdam, Riga and Copenhagen.

Sport and adventurous training (AT) play a major part in unit life every month, training towards the Inter-URNU Sports weekend in February. Cadets have access to all the AT courses the Royal Navy has to offer and can gain qualifications in skiing, paragliding, diving and sailing, to name a few.

Each unit has close connections with Royal Navy ships, submarines and air squadrons with regular visits on board or to establishments on offer including a two-week



● Cadets get the opportunity to experience life at sea aboard one of the Fleet's P2000s

flying camp at RNAS Yeovilton where they get the chance to fly the Grob Tutor aircraft.

Each cadet will be issued with a Naval uniform which they wear to training nights and on ceremonial occasions, which may include hosting VIP's and formal dinners. The units have built strong ties and relationships within their local communities and due to their professional, mature and confident attitudes, cadets are often asked to represent the URNU at important events.

In return for these unique opportunities the cadets are required to attend weekly training nights during term time and requested to attend two out of a number of formal occasions throughout the year.

Their university education remains priority with exemptions accepted during busy exam periods. In order to achieve their at-sea training and complete their Officer Cadet and Midshipman task books, students take part in three "at sea" weekends a year and at least ten days on either the Easter or summer deployments.

The training is structured so they are able to qualify and earn a Level 5 certificate in Leadership and Management from the Chartered Management Institute. There is a daily rate of pay which the students receive

for any sea time they complete and they also get a percentage of the daily rate for each training night they attend.

Each summer the units organise "Leavers Divisions" which is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the graduating cadets and is attended by military and local VIP's as well as their friends and families.

This gives them the chance to reflect on their experiences and memories during their time at the URNU before they move onto life after university.

A number of the cadets then choose to either join the Naval Service but there is no obligation to continue with the military once they leave.

Officer Cadet Eve Ashton, from Wales URNU said: "The URNU is an amazing opportunity and I recommend it to everyone even if they are not interested in joining the Royal Navy when they graduate.

"I have met some great people, formed some lifelong friendships. The skills you gain through the URNU are viewed highly by employers everywhere."

For further information see www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/operations/uk-home-waters/university-training

Find your local University Royal Naval Unit

URNU HQ: Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, Devon TQ6 9JT

Bristol: HMS Flying Fox, Winterstoke Road, Bristol BS3 2NS

Wales: CO/HMS Cambria, Hayes Point, Sully, South Glamorgan CF64 5XU

Manchester: University Barracks, Boundary Lane, Manchester M15 6DH

Liverpool: RN HQ, 80 Sefton Street, East Brunswick Dock, Liverpool L3 4DZ

Glasgow: 95 University Place, Glasgow G12 8SU

Edinburgh: Hepburn House, 89 East Claremont Street, Edinburgh EH7 4HU

Northumbrian: HMS Calliope, South Shore Road, Gatehead, Tyne and Wear NE8 2BE

Yorkshire: Carr Lodge, Carlton Barracks, Carlton Gate, Leeds LS7 1HE

Birmingham: HMS Forward, 42 Tilton Road, Garrison Lane, Birmingham B9 4PP

Cambridge: 2 Chaucer Road, Cambridge CB2 7EB

Oxford: Falklands House, Oxpens Road, Oxford OX1 1RX

London: HMS President, 72 St Katherine's Way, London E1W 1UQ

Sussex: Territorial Army Barracks, 198 Dyke Road, Brighton BN1 5AS

Southampton: Room 451/06, NOC, Waterfront Campus, European Way SO14 3ZH



● PO(C) Alex Mansfield receives her award from Lynn Hook

Rewarding night

THE Mayor of Gosport, Councillor Lynn Hook, inspected youngsters from **HMS Sultan's Royal Naval Cadets** at the unit's Divisions and awards night.

PO(C) Alex Mansfield, 15, was presented with the unit's senior cadet of the year award, while 17-year-old CPO(C) Reuben Shilling received the Portsmouth Area Volunteer Cadet Corp Field Gun Command Trophy on behalf of the unit.

WO1 Mark Branson said: "This was the first time that we were able to welcome the Mayor of Gosport in to the unit as our VIP, and the cadets were really

glowing with excitement when they heard she was coming.

"Our Divisions event signals reaching the end of another successful year for the unit and, whether one of our bright new recruits or one of our capable older members about to move on to the next stage, each one of them can feel proud of the contribution they've made."

HMS Sultan RNC currently has around 60 cadets who enjoy regular Sports (Monday) and Naval General training (Thursday) evenings at their HQ based in Fort Grange Keep, HMS Sultan.



● Sir Ben joins cadets in front of the new Island Flyer hovercraft

Ryde off to a flyer

RYDE Sea Cadets took part in the naming ceremony of two new hovercraft.

The unit's band, headed by Royal Marines C/Sgt Lee Hodges, played at the ceremony at Hovertravel's HQ in Ryde while junior and senior cadets carried out drill routines.

The two vessels were blessed by Father Jonathan Redvers Harris, Chaplain to Ryde Sea Cadets.



Cheers for helping

CADETS from **TS Cardiff** helped out at the annual Race for Life in aid of cancer charities at Cardiff's Cooper's Field.

All the runners were appreciative as cadets distributed drinks, snacks and medals to competitors at the finishing line.

Runner Nichola Hooper said: "I'd just like to thank all the cadets who stood and cheered

me on, all the way through the race. They all took the time to congratulate me, which meant the world to me, as I never dreamed I would be able to do it."

The event is a poignant one for TS Cardiff, the unit having lost a very gregarious and popular member of its ship's company to a brain tumour last year.



Daughter produces the goods

THE Prince of Wales made it a special day for the young daughter of a recovering former Royal Marine when he visited the Royal Navy in Plymouth.

Kezia Ormrod, 11, along with her father Mark, an injured veteran, presented the prince with a posy of flowers and a basket of produce from a garden for rehabilitating troops at HMNB Devonport.

Mark and Kezia were among 350 military and civilian guests introduced to the prince during a stop on his summer tour of the South West. He is Commodore-in-Chief of the Royal Navy Command in Devonport.

Mark, who lost both legs and an arm during a mine explosion in Afghanistan in 2010, represented charities such as Help for Heroes and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity which help people like him at the naval base.

He said: "The first thing Prince Charles said to me was that we'd met before. But even so, it was an absolute honour, it always will be."

"He asked me about my recovery and I said I was doing very well. He asked me when I was taking part in the Invictus Games and I said hopefully, next year and that I'd possibly be swimming, running and cycling."

Kezia curtsied and answered questions about where the produce came from and if she was looking after her father.

She said: "It was fun meeting him, but I was a bit nervous. I practised my curtsying and it went well."

"He asked me where the vegetables and flowers came from and I said it was from the Heroes Garden where the veterans go when they are getting better."

"I helped present the flowers and I said I was looking after my dad."

Collingwood on parade

COMMANDER Operations Rear Admiral Bob Tarrant visited HMS Collingwood as the guest of honour and Reviewing Officer at the establishment's annual Ceremonial Divisions.

In addition to taking the salute from the 800 officers and ratings on parade, Admiral Tarrant presented awards and medals to a number of individuals reflecting both academic achievement and exemplary service.

Escorted by Capt Andy Jordan, the Captain of HMS Collingwood and the Maritime Warfare School, the Admiral inspected the Guard of Honour before reviewing HM Royal Marines Band Collingwood, who provided the musical accompaniment.

In the money

HMS Sutherland had two lucky winners of the Sports Lottery over back-to-back weeks with a total amount of £5,500.



● Members of the ship's WE department gather on the port sponson to mark the anniversary of the engineering branch; young officers helped record children's books



Marine engineers celebrate aboard Fleet Flagship

Ocean's heaven

THE Royal Fleet Flagship hosted the inaugural Marine Engineer's Dinner to mark the 179th anniversary of the Engineering Branch.

WO1 ET Kev Robinson banged a 4lb hammer against an old cylinder head to mark the dinner in HMS Ocean.

The dinner celebrated the first formalised roles in HM ships for engineers and engineering boys.

Seventy members of the ME department attended the dinner in the junior rates' dining hall, with those on watch dining at a special table in the ship's control centre.

The evening of fine dining was interspersed with readings of the Admiralty Order by the three youngest ETMEs onboard, a *Stoker's Story*, the *Engineer's Poem* and the first HMS Ocean Stoker's Awards ceremony.

ETME Dan McKee won the much coveted 'Stoker's Stoker' award and has the privilege of wearing silver ear duffs for the next year and ETME Dan Connor won the 'Dripping Tap' award for his constructive criticism.

The evening was the brainchild of CPOET Alex Ross who investigated the history behind the birth of the engineering branch.

The hard work in arranging the evening was carried out during a busy programme in the ship that



● ETME Dan Connor receives the 'Dripping Tap' award from Cdr Mike Thompson; A pre-wet trial on the flightdeck of HMS Ocean

included a citadel test and pre-wet trial, and was completed by WO1 ET Kev Robinson and LET Scotty Barwell.

Toasts were made to the Queen and the Marine Engineering Branch.

The day was especially memorable for ETME Inderjeet Mayhem, who shares his birthday with the branch; he truly was 'born to be a stoker'.

The date was also marked by the WE department, the younger brother in the engineering branch, with traditional 'sundowners' on the port DLH sponson.

The sponson was used the day before for the first DLH firings in over two years for the Royal Navy and six years for HMS Ocean.

Commander Marine Engineering Mike Thompson said: 'There is no more fitting place to hold these first branch birthday celebrations than on the Fleet Flagship at sea.'

"Engineers remain the heartbeat of our modern ships as they did 179 years ago."

■ Young officers aboard HMS Ocean have been helping record a number of popular children's

stories. More than 100 members of the ship's company recorded stories, including *The Gruffalo*, *Aliens Love Underpants* and *Room on the Broom* for their children, nieces, nephews and godchildren.

The recordings are for the Storybook Waves Scheme, sponsored by the charity Aggies.

The recordings will be turned into a CD for each sailor's nominated recipient and will help with maintaining contact between children and their loved ones throughout Ocean's six months away.

Sub Lt Shackles said: 'It has been a real privilege to help members of the ship's company connect with their children in this way and to see how much it means to people to be able to do this.'

Lt Cdr Tim Lawrenson added: 'One of the things I miss most when I am away is being able to read to my children at bedtime. With these recordings, I still get to do it.'

For information, about the scheme visit www.storybookwaves.org.uk

■ Engineers celebrate, see pages 30-31



Fancy a final wet, sir?

FOR his last act as CO of 846 NAS Lt Col Del Stafford undertook his last Merlin flight and subsequently got thoroughly soaked.

Lt Col Stafford commissioned into the Royal Marines in 1994 and following training at CTCRM was appointed as a Troop Commander in 40 Commando.

In late 1996 he undertook flying training at the School of Army Aviation and after a brief spell at 847 NAS, flying Gazelle AH1, he converted to Sea King Mk4.

Thereafter he served with 845 and 846 NAS as a Flight 2IC, Flight Commander and Operations Officer.

In 2001 he returned to Commando Helicopter Force as

an instructor at 848 NAS.

He re-joined 846 NAS in 2004 before an assignment to the staff of Director Naval Personnel.

He then returned to the cockpit in 2009 as the Executive Officer 845 NAS.

He was subsequently assigned as Chief of Staff CHF before being appointed Senior Naval Officer at 846 NAS in December 2013.

Following his conversion to Merlin Mk3/3A Lt Col Stafford assumed command of 846 NAS in September 2014.

Lt Col Stafford is moving from RNAS Yeovilton to the MOD's Defence Strategy and Priorities Department.

Picture: LPhot Dan Rosenbaum

Simon's got record in the stringbag

A PILOT has completed his 100th flying hour at the controls of the oldest surviving Fairey Swordfish.

Lt Simon Wilson, a qualified helicopter instructor with 815 NAS at RNAS Yeovilton, achieved the milestone while flying between air displays at Newcastle.

It's the first time since WW2 that a pilot has achieved 100 flying hours in a Swordfish.

"It is a great privilege to fly such an iconic aircraft and to have achieved 100 hours, is something I am very proud of," he said.

"The aircraft is only allowed to fly for a small number of hours each season and I have been lucky enough to have flown the Swordfish since 2011."

Lt Wilson, pictured right and below at the controls, has flown both the Mk1 and Mk2

Swordfish, something that he achieves alongside his day job, instructing transitioning aircrew on the next generation of Royal Naval Wildcat Helicopters.

"I have been lucky enough to have flown the Mk1, W5856 and Mk2, LS326.

"It is a great honour to fly W5856 in particular as she is the only Mk1 in existence anywhere in the world – there aren't any in museums.

"I hope to be able to fly many more Swordfish hours in the future; there is nothing else quite like her anywhere in the world, quite literally."

Nicknamed the "stringbag" because the crews felt that the Swordfish, like a shopping bag, could carry anything, W5856 was grounded with corrosion in her wing spars in 2003 and her future looked uncertain.

BAE Systems stepped in and constructed a new set of wings which were delivered to the Royal Navy Historic Flight in 2012.

W5856 was finally restored to full flying condition and saved for the nation by a major grant from the Peter Harrison Heritage Foundation and the aircraft re-joined the display circuit in 2015, painted in the pre-war colours of 810 Squadron embarked in HMS Ark Royal.

At the same time, the latest generation of multi-role helicopter and Lt Wilson's 'day-job aircraft', stood up at RNAS Yeovilton with the front line units, the oldest and the youngest aircraft flying out of the home of the Fleet Air Arm.

Lt Wilson is now on course to complete a second milestone, 3,000 military flying hours.



Pictures: LPhot Dan Rosenbaum



Marine in spotlight

A ROYAL Marine based at HMS Raleigh has achieved a Navy first leading a platoon of recruits at their passing-out-parade.

C/Sgt Alan Baker is a training officer at the base in Torpoint and was asked to stand-in as the Guard Officer for his class's parade, becoming the first Royal Marine of his rank to do so.

Royal Marines follow a slightly different drill and the 41-year-old said: "Guard selection to decide who takes the lead happens in week seven. I was asked to be the Guard Officer the day before, so I stayed up until about 1 am that night, learning the commands and came in the following morning and it went really well."

There was also a matter of protocol. C/Sgt Baker explained: "In the Royal Navy Guard Officers normally carry a sword and anyone below Warrant Officer carries a cutlass. However with the Royal Marines only Warrant Officers or above can carry a sword, so the Parade Sergeant Major said that I was to carry a rifle."

C/Sgt Baker joined the Royal Marines in 1997 and has served in operations all over the world.



Far left: Chef Grace Threapleton from HMS Queen Elizabeth and PO Sid Wilkins; Left: Chef Sophie Stanger from HMS Dauntless during the cook and serve competition

Pictures: LPhot Paul Hall

Turning up heat for debut contest

TEAMS from Portsmouth Naval Base swept the board in a cooking contest open to Navy chefs across the fleet.

Twenty-one chefs took part in the inaugural two-day Portsmouth Flotilla Cook and Serve competition at Admiralty House – the Naval Base residence of the Second Sea Lord.

Each team of three had to prepare a three-course meal for four, with wine, in 90 minutes with a budget of £95.

Triumphing on day one were the Naval Base chefs from Retinue Support Pool (RSP) team one, with the RSP team two winning on the second day. Both won gold and best in class.

Team one was headed by PO Sid Wilkins, supported by Leading Chef Ben Williams and AB

Std Zoe Wood.

The successful team two comprised PO Scott Furber, Leading Chef Martin Northeast and AB Std Louise Bowman.

CPO Joey Murray, who organised the event with CPO Si Geldart, said: "We had professional judges and they said the standard was of the highest quality."

"We now hope to make this an annual event, with more teams from ships and units taking part in the future."

The other teams taking part were two from the new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth who won a silver and bronze medal, HMS Duncan (gold), Second Sea Lord/Fleet Commander (silver), and HMS Dauntless (bronze).



● Musician Richard Sharp with Marian Le May and the tambourine loaned to her grandfather in 1917

Picture: LPhot Kyle Heller

You've got to hand it to Marian

A TAMBOURINE borrowed by a Royal Marines bandsman for his daughter's May Day celebrations in 1917 has been returned to its rightful home.

Private George Fly lent the instrument to five-year-old Edna a year after surviving the Battle of Jutland.

Her daughter Marian Le May handed it back to the Royal Marines School of Music in Portsmouth where it will go on display.

The story goes that George gave Edna the tambourine to use while dancing round the maypole at St Vincent's Royal Marines School at Gosport where she was a pupil.

She apparently kept it for school May Day celebrations in subsequent years and it has remained in the family ever since. Edna died in 2002 when the tambourine was handed down to her daughter.

Mrs Le May, 74, of Drayton, Portsmouth, said: "The tambourine has really become part of our family history – a real talking point down the years.

"We played with it as kids when it had lovely red, white and blue ribbons but those have disappeared over time."



● Capt Trevor Gulley and wife Priscilla bid farewell to HMS Sultan

Picture: LPhot Guy Pool

Super send-off

THE Commanding Officer of HMS Sultan bids farewell to the base as he ends his 34-year Naval career in style.

Capt Trevor Gulley was joined by his wife Priscilla for a ride around the Gosport base in Sultan's Super Sentinel steam lorry.

The 55-year-old leaves HMS Sultan after more than five years within the establishment, firstly serving as the Commandant of the Defence College of Technical Training's Defence School of Marine Engineering, and then, additionally, over the past three years, as the CO.

He joined the Royal Navy in 1982 after completing a Naval Architect Technician Apprenticeship at Devonport Royal Dockyard. A Marine Engineer by trade, Capt Gulley

served in a number of warships, including Invincible and Bulwark.

He has held staff appointments in Bath, Portsmouth and in Naples and has twice worked in a training role on the staff of Flag Officer Sea Training in Plymouth.

In June 2014 he was appointed an Aide-de-Camp to the Queen.

As he formally handed over responsibilities to Capt Peter Towell he said: "The success and reputation for excellence at HMS Sultan rests very firmly with the many staff, both military and civilian, who work so tirelessly to train Royal Navy Air and Marine Engineer Officers and Technicians. I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to all staff for their loyalty and dedication throughout my tenure."

West Country sojourn

MEMBERS of Haven branch deployed for their annual weekend trip in early July, with their destination being the appropriately-named Anchorage Hotel in Babbacombe, Torquay.

Almost 30 shipmates, partners and guests made the journey from Haverfordwest to Devon on a package organised by Isle of Wight Tours Ltd.

Most of Saturday was taken up with a visit to Devonport Heritage Centre, including a tour of HMS Courageous, a Cold War fleet submarine – a bit of an eye-opener for the skimmers in the party.

The following day included a visit to the White Ensign Club in Exeter, although when shipmates heard about the Shrouds of the Somme display in Netherhay Gardens they decided it should be on the itinerary.

The project features almost 20,000 12in figures, each wrapped in a hand-stitched shroud and laid in rows on the ground, created by artist Rob Heard and conceived by Rob and Steve Knightley of leading acoustic roots band Show of Hands.

During their visit a man broadcast the name and age of the soldier that each figurine represented – the total number of 19,240 is the death toll of Allied soldiers on the first day of the Somme, July 1 1916.

The Haven party was made very welcome by their shipmates at the White Ensign Club, where they enjoyed an excellent buffet, the odd tot and a chance to wing the lamp with like-minded individuals.

One of WW1's last victims honoured

A RELATIVE scatters soil on the freshly-rededicated grave of a Royal Marine killed in the final hours of the Great War – but denied the full honours a century ago.

Private Walter Buckley died barely 24 hours before the war's end, assaulting German positions in the Belgian industrial town of Mons – the very place where British soldiers had first clashed with the enemy four years earlier.

The 18-year-old was one of ten men from Anson Battalion of the Royal Naval Division – the sailors and marines sent to the Continent to fight alongside the Army – during the attack on the morning of November 10 1918.

Walter's body was never formally identified and he was buried as an 'unknown seaman'.

A century down the line and research by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre, Royal Marines historical branch and Commonwealth War Graves Commission has formally identified the marine – allowing a named headstone to be installed bearing the epitaph: *To live in the hearts those we leave behind is not to die.*

It was around that new stone in Tournai, between Mons and Lille, that 13 members of Walter's family – still largely concentrated in the Plymouth area and still with links to the military (one of Walter's great nephews is serving in the Army) – plus a Royal Marines bugler, local dignitaries and RN representatives from the British Embassy in the



Netherlands gathered as the young marine's grave was rededicated in a service led by RN chaplain Tim Wilkinson.

"Having served in Belgium with the Army for several years not knowing that Walter was buried in Tournai, I could not think of a better resting place for him," said the marine's nephew Walter Evans from Launceston.

"My uncle was an unknown soldier for 98 years and it's a happy ending that his family can go to the grave and see his name there, knowing he has been officially identified."

He continued: "But it's a big shame that this event has come so late. For so long the family have always been told that he was blown to bits and that's why

there was no grave to visit. Most sadly this has come too late for his mother and brothers and my mother."

He said his family was overwhelmed by the turn-out by Belgian veterans' organisations – some 15 were represented at the rededication.

"They treated this as a 'band of brothers', which means a lot because otherwise they didn't know who he was. The local people are so lovely and I know that they will visit the grave – as indeed Walter's family now will."

Walter Buckley had worked as a baker and usher at Plymouth's Forum cinema until he was apparently handed a white feather – at the time a sign that people regarded you as a coward.



It prompted the teenager to falsify his age – he claimed he was 18, not 15 – and follow his father's footsteps, joining the Royal Marines Light Infantry, forerunners of today's commandos.

In September 1918, he was assigned to the Anson Battalion and fought with the RND on the Western Front during the '100 Days to Victory' campaign, pushing the Germans back across northern France and Belgium.

On the morning of November 10 1918 – with armistice negotiations with the Germans already under way – the Ansons were ordered to attack the German line south of Mons alongside 1st London Regiment and The Royal Irish Regiment.

Medical Service tribute

A MEMORIAL dedicated to the Royal Navy Medical Service will be unveiled at the National Memorial Arboretum this month.

The Service began a project in October 2014 to raise funds and commission a memorial, with retired members making donations or carrying out fundraising events to support the £20,000 project.

The memorial will commemorate everyone who has served in the Medical Service.

It will be unveiled at a dedication service on Friday September 23, attended by the Chaplain of the Fleet and the Medical Director General (Naval).

Current and former members of the Royal Navy Medical Service who wish to attend the service in Staffordshire should contact WO1(MA) P Duncan at NCHQ Medical Division on 023 9262 5587 or email peter.duncan708@mod.uk.

The arboretum at Alrewas has more than 300 memorials commemorating military and civilian organisations.

At the centre is the Armed Forces Memorial, which honours Service personnel who have died in the service of their country.

The memorials also represent those who have served and who are serving.

Medal for veterans

FIVE heroes of the D-Day landings received France's highest decoration of honour in recognition of their bravery.

The Scottish veterans were presented with the *Legion d'Honneur* at a reception in Paisley Town Hall.

The Royal Navy veterans honoured were Gerald Fisher, 91, (City of Glasgow RNA), John Sneddon, 90, Henry Bryce, 91, Daniel McNicol, 92, and Robert Faulds, 96.

French Consul General for Scotland Emmanuel Cocher, who presented the medals, said: "I am truly honoured to present these veterans with the *Legion d'Honneur*. France will never forget the bravery they showed during the liberation of France 70 years ago."

Final service for Bourne

BOURNE branch have laid up their standard with sadness because of falling numbers.

Despite efforts to recruit new members, the number had fallen and the decision was made to close the branch.

A ceremony was held at Bourne Abbey Church, attended by the RNA President and his wife, along with the President of the Royal British Legion Stamford.

Shipmates who wish to retain the comradeship will continue to meet informally at a monthly lunch in Bourne.

For more details contact the branch secretary on 01780 753787.



Historic year for the Deeps

TORPEDO and anti-submarine ratings past and present met for their annual dinner and dance at the Copthorne Hotel in Plymouth to celebrate the 61st anniversary of the Anti-Submarine Warfare Instructors (ASWI's) Association.

Guest of honour was Rear Admiral John Clink, Flag Officer Sea Training and Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Training).

ASWI Chairman CPO(UW) David Coleman chaired the annual meeting and the event.

This is an historic year for the ASWI – at the annual meeting the motion was passed to now open up membership to all serving and ex-serving AB(UW)/AB(S).

The planning process for the 62nd ASWI anniversary dinner has now started. It is intended to hold next year's dinner in Portland in late September – further details will be published on the ASWI website.

The aims of the association are to promote *esprit de corps* among its members in order to help and advise them, professionally on all matters concerning anti-

submarine warfare.

The association also encourages its members to broaden their social pastimes by holding regular meetings and social events. This includes the promotion of charitable activities and support to deserving causes. Membership is open to the following:

Full membership – all serving UW, sonar and mine warfare Warrant Officers, Senior Ratings as well as serving LS(UW)/AB(UW) ratings.

Retired torpedo and anti-submarine instructors (TASI), sonar and mine warfare Warrant Officers and Senior Ratings. All serving or ex-serving aircrew(ASW).

All serving or ex-serving submarine sonar UW rates.

Associate membership – Members of affiliated instructor associations. Serving and ex-serving officers on application to the association. Sonar senior rates from other navies.

Further details for membership, social events and the next annual dinner can be found at www.aswi.co.uk

PUSSEY'S RUM 
"Liquid History"

Pussey's Blue Label is the original Royal Navy style rum inspired by the Admiralty's blending recipe last used when the Royal Navy discontinued its daily ration on 31 July 1970.

This traditional & award winning rum, now served at today's issue strength, truly is Liquid History. For info and support in the UK, contact Pussers.rum@cellartrends.co.uk

Pussey's Rum has secured an exclusive discounted rate ONLY available at www.drinkfinder.co.uk
(add: ROYALNAVY15 at the checkout)

PussersRum.com [/pussers](https://www.facebook.com/PussersRum) [@pussers](https://www.twitter.com/@pussers) [/pussersrum](https://www.instagram.com/pussersrum/) [/pussersrum](https://www.youtube.com/pussersrum)

For all the facts visit www.drinkaware.co.uk

↓ RNA Central Office,
Room 209, Semaphore
Tower (PP70), HM Naval
Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.
↓ admin@royalnavalassoc.com
↓ 023 9272 3747
↓ www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



● Capt Kent with Paul Lomas

Cruising surprise

FORMER Royal Navy Petty Officer Paul Lomas received a surprise telegram while celebrating his 70th birthday on a cruise liner.

Paul's family had arranged for a celebratory message from Ministry of Defence to be handed to him during a dinner on board.

The captain of the Emerald Princess, Capt Bill Kent, invited Paul and his wife Bette to the Crown Grill and made the presentation, along with a bottle of Champagne.

The couple were also invited onto the bridge of the Princess Cruises ship for a VIP tour.

Paul served in the Royal Navy and found himself onboard HMS Minerva alongside the Prince of Wales in 1973.

Paul also served in HMS Eagle during his RN career.

The presentation was arranged by Paul's children Tracey, Stephen, Chris and Nicola.

Hero honoured

THE Royal Star and Garter Homes have marked the centenary of a war memorial to Jack Cornwell, who died from his wounds sustained on HMS Chester at the Battle of Jutland.

A memorial cross at St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate in London was erected in Jack's memory.

Staff from the homes held a ceremony at the cross to mark the centenary of its unveiling.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery submarine in our July edition (right) was HMS Alcide, and the scrap metal firm that bought her was based in Hull.

The correct answers were provided by S. Keenan of Nottingham, who wins £50.

This month's destroyer (above) was built by Vickers Armstrong and launched in March 1943.

In 1952-54 she was converted to a Type 15 frigate, but before she was scrapped in 1967 her stern structure was removed and fitted to a sister ship.

1) What is the ship's name, and 2) which ship received her stern?

We have removed the pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News,



Last-ditch bid to save President

HMS President Preservation Trust, the charity that owns HMS President 1918, London's last remaining World War 1 ship and one of only three left, has been refused Lottery funding of £330,000 to secure its future.

During WW1 President was a secret German U-boat submarine hunter (a 'Q ship') shadowing the Atlantic convoys with concealed guns. In WW2 she was used to protect St Paul's Cathedral from the Luftwaffe and as a base for the French Resistance.

President had to be moved from her 92-year mooring at Victoria Embankment in February 2016 to storage at Chatham in Kent awaiting refurbishment of her hull and a new mooring in central London due to the major Thames Tideway Tunnel

sewer project.

The City of London Corporation have in principle given their support to a new mooring for the President adjacent to London Bridge on the north bank of the River Thames.

However without the funding required to pay for this, the trustees of the charity are unable to move forward.

President is due to be a key part of WW1 centenary ceremonies in 2018 as she marks her own centenary that year.

The charity has the support of senior politicians and peers, the military and related organisations and charities.

The Heritage Lottery Fund said although 'the application was fundable' they considered it 'too high risk.'

Gawain Cooper, chairman of the

Preservation Trust, said "Our trustees are bitterly disappointed that with all the public support we have, and after having been encouraged to reapply for the £330,000, that again we were refused support."

"This decision will most likely condemn the President to the scrapyard."

The Trust's last resort is an appeal and application to the Treasury for government funding, and it is hoped that Chancellor Philip Hammond will now step in and save her.

Supporters can help through Justgiving.com and by signing a petition at <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/163742>

For further information contact charlie@hmspresident.com

New branch opens in Stowmarket

A NEW branch of the Royal Naval Association has been commissioned in deepest Suffolk.

Stowmarket has always had close links with the Army and RAF, with associations that meet at the town's Royal British Legion.

But what of the Senior Service?

A group of Navy and Royal Marines veterans had the same thought at a remembrance parade more than 18 months ago, and what started as a brief discussion came to fruition in early June this year.

The 'Stowmarket Seven' needed the support and guidance of RNA Central Office in Portsmouth – which was given wholeheartedly – and shipmates from Area 5 also played their part in detailed discussions.

Commissioning day – June 5, as close as they could get to the centenary of the Battle of Jutland – was a great success, with S/M Richard Ascott of the National Council conducting the commissioning and swearing in the members of the new branch, as well as overseeing the election of its first committee.

Amongst those in attendance was Bury St

Edmunds MP Jo Churchill, who accepted the offer of becoming the branch Patron.

Many other local dignitaries and representatives of the local community, and of the local branch of the British Legion, also attended.

New faces were welcomed to the commissioning event and the branch has already successfully raised sufficient funds to purchase a standard which it is hoped will be dedicated in time for Stowmarket's Remembrance Parade ceremonies in November.

An early invitation to the new branch saw members take part in a commemorative service to mark the centenary of the start of the Somme offensive on July 1 1916.

S/M Pete Chivers, blew the commemorative whistle at precisely 7.30am to mark the time when the British started their attack at the Somme exactly 100 years previously, while branch chairperson S/M Olga Anderson, gave a reading of *Aftermath*, a poem by Siegfried Sassoon.

S/M Pete said: "It was a great honour to be asked to blow the whistle to start the commemoration."

Naval Quirks

NOW WE ALL KNOW HOW DIFFICULT IT WAS TO SINK GERMAN BATTLESHIPS...



SO IT MAY SURPRISE YOU TO KNOW THAT THEIR WWI BATTLESHIP, SMS 'BADEN' WAS SUNK BY TERROR ALONE!



I ASSUME YOU MEAN HMS 'TERROR'?



AM I GETTING THAT PREDICTABLE?



MYSTERY PICTURE 259

Name
Address
.....
My answers: (1).....
(2).....

Moving moments in the USA

A SENIOR rating attended two Anzac memorial services in the USA.

CPOAET Jon Boast, along with colleague Flt Lt David Hunt, are both based at Edwards Air Force Base with 17(R) Squadron carrying out operational testing on the F-35B joint strike fighter.

The first memorial service was held in Long Beach California aboard the retired WW2 battleship the USS Iowa, and the second memorial was held aboard the retired aircraft carrier the USS Midway in San Diego.

Being part of the 101st anniversary ceremonies aboard the USS Iowa and Midway was particularly poignant for Flt Lt Hunt as his great-great uncle, Private Albert Edmonds of the 5th Battalion Wiltshire Regiment was killed in action during the Gallipoli campaign at Cape Helles.

CPO Boast, who also participated in the 90th anniversary ceremony of the Gallipoli campaign while serving aboard HMS Chatham in 2005, said: 'It was a privilege to return to USS Iowa as the last time I set foot on her she was still operational and alongside in Portsmouth in 1989.'

Maidstone on parade

REPRESENTATIVES from throughout Kent attended the annual Maidstone branch Sea Service.

Ten standards were paraded, including those from Area 2 and the Prince of Wales Sea Training School.

Guests of honour were the Mayor and Mayoress of Maidstone and Lt Cdr Mark Van den Berg, who took the salute at the march-past.

The band from Herne Bay Sea Cadets led the parade to St Luke's Church for the service, followed by a reception at the local Civil Service Club.

The ashes of shipmate John Carr, late of Maidstone branch, were scattered in the Solent off Portsmouth.

Together again

SHIPMATES from the commissioning of HMS Lincoln in 1968-9 held their annual reunion.

The veterans were hosted by the Mayor of Lincoln Cllr Yvonne Bodger and Sheriff Hilary Wilarton at the Guildhall, where the ship's bell is kept.

A mess dinner was held in Old Deans House and, accompanied by their wives, they attended a service at Lincoln Cathedral.

Led by Capt Tom Sunter, they were met by the Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire Toby Dennis and escorted into the cathedral by Mike Williams, chairman of Lincoln branch, who carried the branch standard.

Boarding is a key part of ensuring our pupils thrive

Located on the edge of the Dorset and Somerset border, children thrive at **Perrott Hill** because of the family atmosphere, excellent teaching and breadth of extracurricular activities and opportunities.

Boarding is a key part of life at Perrott Hill and our experienced boarding team support children as they become more independent and learn important skills, from being organised to teamwork.

Improvements to our boarding facilities include a new common room for boys and girls and reconfiguration of the boarding space as our boarding provision continues to go from strength to strength.

Designed to blend into the landscape, a new purpose-built music school to enhance our music provision and inspire generations of musicians will be completed this month, and a group of singers will be performing a series of special concerts in Venice during October.

Our sporting teams continue to have fantastic seasons from individual athletic and swimming performances to team sports including rugby, hockey and cricket.

We recently celebrated at the National History Museum a group of our Year 7 artists coming third in the hotly-contested David Shepherd

Wildlife Foundation Global Canvas Art and Poetry Competition.

Our new Roundhouse in the woods has been a popular addition to our Forest School and served as a perfect base for hosting a special Forest School summer event with local primary schools.

Our autumn term open mornings are taking place on Friday and Saturday October 7 and 8.

To find out more about life at Perrott Hill, request a prospectus or to arrange a visit, email admissions@perrott hill.com or telephone Philippa, our marketing and admissions manager, on 01460 72051.



Perrott Hill

Time and space for a full education



Perrott Hill's Independent Schools Inspectorate Report was outstanding, with the top mark of 'Excellent' awarded in each and every category. We encourage you to read the Tatler Schools Guide 2016 and the Good Schools Guide reports which capture the values and ethos of this flourishing co-educational boarding school.

Perrott Hill, North Perrott, Crewkerne, Somerset, TA18 7SL 01460 72051 www.perrott hill.com headmaster@perrott hill.com



The Duke of York's Royal Military School

LEADERSHIP ● CHARACTER ● PRIDE ● SELF-DISCIPLINE ● SPIRITUALITY ● SPORTSMANSHIP ● RESPECT

Open Morning: 8 October 2016

Contact us to book a place or to arrange a personal tour and interview

Full and weekly boarding now available

Located on a beautiful 150 acre site in Dover, Kent, The Duke of York's Royal Military School is a state boarding school for students aged 11 to 18.

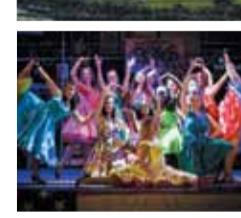
We welcome applications from any student who wants to study GCSEs and A Levels at our unique and iconic school with its strong traditions.

Why choose us?

- An independent school atmosphere at an affordable price. £4,165 per term* covers ALL the boarding costs, with the education paid for by the State.
- Graded 'Good' in all areas by Ofsted.
- A £24.9m building programme has just been completed to enhance our already impressive school site and facilities including new boarding houses, teaching blocks, drama studio, sports centre and climbing wall.
- Full and weekly boarding available.
- Students enjoy an active lifestyle including sport, music, drama and outdoor activities, with over 70 clubs and activities offered.
- Unique ethos helps promote character and life skills, with students encouraged to achieve their potential in a supportive community.
- Frequent involvement in high profile National events including the Royal Festival of Remembrance.

2016/17 fees are just £12,495* per year.

If you qualify for CEA, you will only pay £1,249.50 per year.



Enquiries: 01304 245073
admin.office@doyrms.com

www.doyrms.com

We inspire students to reach their goals

The headmaster of **The Royal Hospital School**, Simon Lockyer, talks about challenging young people and navigating success.

"The Royal Hospital School was founded in 1712 in Greenwich, London, to improve navigation through education and, as it prepared boys for a life at sea, many went on to become explorers and pioneers of their time."

We are immensely proud of these historic links and discovery, exploration and challenge continue to shape our ethos.

The traditional values of loyalty, commitment, courage, respect, service and integrity have underpinned the school's core aims and philosophy from the very beginning. 300 years later, they are still as relevant to the education we provide as they were then.

Today the Royal Hospital School is set in 200 acres of Suffolk countryside overlooking the Stour Estuary and it is a leading independent, co-educational boarding and day school providing a full and broad education, fit for the modern world.

We inspire our pupils to have the courage and commitment to be ambitious for their futures, whichever path they choose.

Everyone can achieve the most exceptional things but we are all different.

That is why we focus on the individual, getting to know every one of our pupils and finding out what motivates them.

We challenge pupils of all academic abilities, steering them to look beyond the moment, and beyond the confines of the classroom, and to approach life with an open and receptive mind.

It is through thinking creativity and taking initiative that they learn to establish, and work towards, their own personal goals.

By understanding a young person's strengths, and what he or she might find more difficult, we can help them to make the right choices at the right time, navigating them through their critical, formative years and ensuring their education becomes the foundation for happiness and success.

It is this unique blend of a values-driven education with the focus on individual challenge and appropriate guidance that enables our pupils to develop into self-reliant, socially responsible adults with enviable open-mindedness and resilience, so sought-after by employers and important in life."

For more information, please contact the registrar on 01473 326136 or admissions@royalhospitalschool.org or go to www.royalhospitalschool.org

Dukies love a challenge

As a unique and iconic place to study for GCSEs and A levels, **The Duke of York's Royal Military School** regularly challenges students – whether they are on exercise at CCF camp, taking in the amazing views at the Brecon Beacons, performing new dance routines on the big stage or proudly representing their school on Grand Day.

The Duke of Kent was guest of honour and inspecting officer at the school's annual Grand Day celebrations, in which pupils perform a Trooping the Colour ceremony.

The whole school paraded in full ceremonial uniform, accompanied by the school's military band.

This year's long awaited Grand Day production didn't disappoint either. There were a variety of acts including music, dance, choir and a stage duologue.

Dukies spent a week in the Brecon Beacons for their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Expedition.

They trekked for four days and camped along the way.

Watch the inter-house athletics video on our home page www.doyrms.com which reflects the excitement of the day.

Our next open day is on Saturday October 8. Please call 01304 245073 to book.



JOIN US AT OUR OPEN MORNINGS

SATURDAY 8 OCTOBER & 12 NOVEMBER, 9AM



DISCOVER AN INSPIRING PLACE TO LEARN SET IN 200 ACRES OF STUNNING SUFFOLK COUNTRYSIDE.



A CO-EDUCATIONAL BOARDING & DAY SCHOOL

GENEROUS DISCOUNTS & BURSARIES FOR SERVICES FAMILIES

To book or request a prospectus, contact Admissions on 01473 326136 or visit www.royalhospitalschool.org/book

Punching above their weight in Perthshire

QUEEN Victoria School (QVS) is a co-educational boarding school fully funded – parents don't pay fees – by the Ministry of Defence to provide stability and continuity of education for the children of UK Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish, or who have served in Scotland or who have been members of a Scottish regiment.

There are 277 pupils in the school, ranging from Primary 7 through to S6.

Age ranges within each year-group are wide, however, because of the very varied and inevitably disrupted educational backgrounds from which the pupils come. One pupil came into S3 having been to 13 different schools; others into P7 having been to 11 different schools – and not just different schools, but different education systems as well.

QVS has a particular brief from the Ministry of Defence to care for those eligible families who could not otherwise afford boarding education.

Ceremonial – piping, drumming, Highland Dancing and drill – constitutes an important part of the life of the school and is a visible link between the pupils and the work that their parents have chosen to do, in the UK Armed Forces.

The Pipes, Drums and Dancers of QVS are internationally renowned, having played at tattoos at home and abroad.

Academic results are consistently well above the national averages, however, and there is a wide programme of extra-curricular activities, games and the Combined Cadet Force.

Major sports are rugby – where QVS is generally considered to “punch well above its weight” as a small school – and hockey, although there is a growing commitment to football as well.

QVS pupils and their families greatly value the strength of mutual support in a school community where all recognise the reality of Service life.

Why you should pick us

WEST Hill Park School strives for excellence.

We offer pupils a high level of responsibility, specialist lessons within specialist classrooms, including a wide range of sporting, music, drama and extracurricular activities with the emphasis on development of the whole child.

All children receive the level of support needed within small classes, using a variety of teaching methods and experiences.

Our children take part in a comprehensive programme of sports taken to a high level,

including team matches, tournaments, county and national events.

All children swim at least once a week and there are opportunities for horse riding, karate, archery and Forest School.

Each break time holds an element of exploration whether it is imaginative play in the woods, playing a game of football, taking part in a tennis match or completing a project in the design and technology studio.

The arts play a fundamental part in our school ethos

as children develop their confidence both on and off the stage.

There are opportunities to sing in several choirs, learn a musical instrument, play in an orchestra and other musical ensembles, create works of art and complete stunning wood and metalwork projects.

West Hill creates a family atmosphere for both its boarders and day pupils.

We are a happy and thriving school and the proof can be seen in all of our confident, respectful, enthusiastic and talented children.



www.westhillpark.com

01329 842356

School in Action

Thursday
29th September 2016
Tours at 10.30am and
2.00pm

If you are unable to attend either of these events, please contact the Registrar direct and she will be happy to arrange a tour of the School at your convenience.

“Staff understand their pupils **exceptionally** well.”

“The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is **excellent**.”

“The quality of Boarding is **excellent**”

Open Morning

Saturday
1st October 2016
9.30 - 11.30am



ISI Inspection April 2016

St Margaret's Lane, Titchfield, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 4BP

Support for spouses

FOR a number of years the Marine Society has provided GCSE and A-level tuition via distance learning and examinations around the globe for Royal Navy personnel on operations.

Now, with support from Greenwich Hospital, who have been supporting the RN since 1694, Marine Society are delighted to be able to extend this funding provision to the spouses of Royal Navy personnel.

To ensure that the maximum number of people can benefit from this, we are defining a spouse as anyone who is living as if married, with a serving member of the RN.

Spouses do not receive RN Standard Learning Credits as serving personnel do but the generous funding on offer from Greenwich Hospital will cover 50 per cent of the full cost of a course, ie a student's contribution to a GCSE would only be around £230 (usually £460), making it a very attractive proposition.

There are a wide range of courses on offer, covering various subjects, including; maths, sciences, English literature, psychology, religious studies and other arts-based subjects.

For further information visit www.marinesociety.org or call 020 7654 7050.

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education@ms-sc.org
marine-society.org

 MARINE SOCIETY

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Recognised for continuing professional development by IMarEST and the Nautical Institute



Raising to Distinction

Open Morning
Sat 17 Sept 2016
Admissions Deadline
Sun 15 Jan 2017

Queen Victoria School in Dunblane is a co-educational boarding school for the children of UK Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish, or who have served in Scotland or who have been members of a Scottish regiment.

The main entry point is into Primary 7 and all places are fully funded for tuition and boarding by the Ministry of Defence.

Families are welcome to find out more by contacting Admissions on +44 (0) 131 310 2927 to arrange a visit.

Queen Victoria School
Dunblane Perthshire
FK15 0JY
www.qvs.org.uk

OPEN MORNING
Saturday 8 October 2016

Discover Dauntsey's

"Dauntsey's is ... Fab"
The Good Schools Guide



Boarding & Day School
Co-educational 11-18

www.dauntseys.org

West Lavington, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 4HE T. 01380 814500

Worthy winner

THIS year's Welbeck Sword has been awarded to Michael Firth, 18, from Guernsey, at the Defence Sixth Form College's annual general inspection.

This is awarded to the upper sixth student whose engagement in key areas of personal development has been viewed as outstanding; this includes academic attainment, physical fitness and officer qualities.

Michael said: "I've enjoyed my time at Welbeck, receiving this award is a real honour and the perfect way to finish two years' of hard work. My thanks go especially to the military team for all their encouragement this year."

Michael, who wants to become an engineering officer in the Royal Navy, will now go on to Southampton University to study mechanical engineering.

On graduating he will start officer training at Britannia Royal Naval College.

Impressive set of visiting speakers

DAUNTEY'S School has announced its line up for the Mercers' Lecture Series for 2016-17.

They are:

■ September 21 2016: Sir Tim Smit KBE – Eden Project and Beyond, by the Founding Director of the Eden Project.

■ October 12 2016: Lucy Hawking – The Great Cosmic Adventure. Renowned author who uses story-telling to help audiences understand and engage with science.

■ November 9 2016: Sarah Outen MBE – Dare to Do. World-record breaking adventurer, published author and inspirational speaker.

■ February 7 2017: Mariella Frostrup – writer and broadcaster.

■ February 23 2017: Sir John Sawers GCMG – Former chief of the British Secret Intelligence

Service.

■ March 9 2017: Professor AC Grayling – The Ethics of War – one of the UK's most prolific public intellectuals and commentators on politics and ethics.

■ April 25 2017: Jeremy Bowen – Reporting on Conflict – the BBC's Middle East Editor since August 2005.

Dauntsey's head teacher Mark Lascelles said: "The Mercers' Lectures are central to encouraging our pupils to engage with world affairs and think beyond the confines of their academic curriculum."

Entry is free, but contact the school if you wish to attend, either by email to info@dauntseys.org or by telephone on 01380 814500. For further information visit www.dauntseys.org

Pride at being first woman

THE new head teacher of **Queen's College**, Taunton, has spoken of her pride at becoming the first woman to take on the role in its 173-year history.

Dr Lorraine Earps, who replaces Mr Chris Alcock, has been deputy head for the past three years and was acting head for the summer term.

Dr Earps is looking to strengthen links between Queen's and the military – Forces families receiving CEA pay only ten per cent of boarding fees.

She said: "When I walked through the doors of Queen's for the very first time, I felt it was a special place.

"I am really looking forward to working with the entire community – and particularly the

outstanding staff and students – to take the school from strength to strength."

Dr Earps, who is married with a 12-year-old son, joined Queen's College from Withington Girls' School where she was director of studies. Prior to that, she was head of chemistry at Stockport Grammar School.

Dr Earps, who was brought up in St Helens, studied chemistry and biochemistry at the University of Southampton before obtaining a doctorate in protein chemistry and then teaching in the state sector for six years.

To find out more about the school, visit www.queenscollege.org.uk, email registrar@queenscollege.org.uk or call 01823 340830.

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For potential engineers with drive, ambition and ability, Welbeck is where potential turns into bright futures as officers in the armed forces or civil service.

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- 2015 Good Schools Guide award for best performance by boys and girls in electronics
- Tuition funded by the Ministry of Defence with means-tested boarding fees
- State-of-the-art facilities with ensuite accommodation
- 99% of students were offered a place at university in 2015
- Students receive £4000 per year bursary whilst at university

Visit www.dsfc.ac.uk to order or download a prospectus and book a place on one of our upcoming Open Days:

Saturday Mornings

17 September 2016
08 October 2016
05 November 2016
26 November 2016

Wednesday Afternoons

28 September 2016
12 October 2016
25 January 2017
08 February 2017



WELBECK

DEFENCE 6TH FORM COLLEGE

Be prepared by enrolling with us

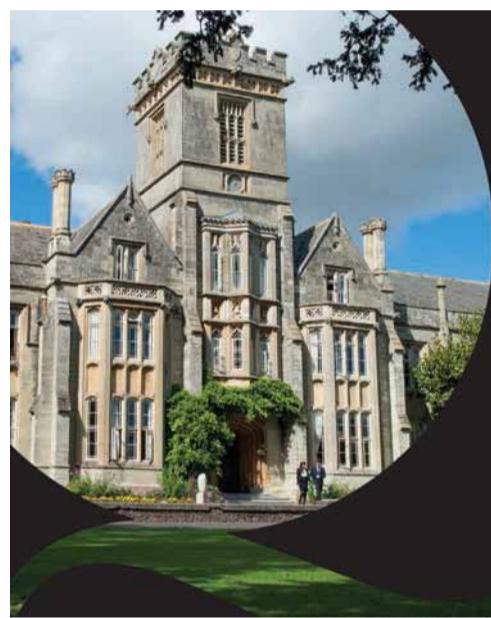
IDEAL for Service learners, the **University of Wolverhampton** offers several emergency planning, resilience and response courses.

You will develop knowledge of principles, practice and policies of emergency planning, strategic leadership and advanced critical-thinking skills, ideal for a move into an emergency management, career advancement, or to pursue academic/ research positions.

Enhance your professional credibility and employability; develop your personal and professional practice; and gain knowledge and understanding of essential concepts, up-to-date research and evolving practice in emergency planning, response and resilience within the UK and internationally.

We offer three flexible part-time routes: PG Cert Emergency Planning, Resilience and Response (one year); PG Dip Emergency Planning, Resilience and Response (two years); MSc Emergency Planning, Resilience and Response (two to three years).

For information, email: stewart.mashiter@wlv.ac.uk or visit: wlv.ac.uk/servicelearner



Build on your skills gained in the RN

THE Chartered Management Institute (CMI) is offering internationally-recognised management and leadership qualifications to members of the Royal Navy who have already completed accredited learning during their career.

To be eligible personnel must meet the following criteria:

- Currently serving in the Royal Navy, in the reserves or a veteran;
- To have completed an accredited course on or after January 1 2010.

CMI offer 12 months free membership to those in the Royal Navy undertaking one of their qualifications. Membership offers access to CMI's complete range of membership benefits including, ManagementDirect – CMI's complete online portal of management and leadership resources.

Learners can also take their qualification further by working towards Chartered Manager (CMgr) status. Awarded only by CMI, becoming chartered demonstrates the vast range of skills and experience gained during a career in the Royal Navy.

For details email mod@managers.org.uk or call 0333 220 3143.

Forces families receiving CEA pay only 10% of boarding fees.

Financial help and awards available.

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registrar@queenscollege.org.uk
www.queenscollege.org.uk



QUEEN'S
COLLEGE

ONE COLLEGE – FOUR SCHOOLS

EMERGE AS A STAND OUT CANDIDATE.

Your leadership training could be accredited with a CMI Management and Leadership qualification.

If you have completed a leadership course after 1st January 2010, whilst you were serving or in the reserve, you could be eligible for a CMI qualification. What's more, those no longer serving may still elect to pay for a relevant qualification that takes account of relevant prior learning.

CMI deliver the 'qualification of choice' for many in the Royal Navy. Its unique status means a CMI qualification is recognised as the gold standard by civilian employers both in the UK and overseas. What's more, upon completion you may be eligible to work towards Chartered Manager status, only awarded by CMI, it is the highest accolade in the managerial profession.

Don't forget! Those who register for or complete any of our Management and Leadership qualifications are also eligible for 12 months free CMI membership, giving you access to a complete range of career development benefits and opportunities.

For further details speak to your education staff or contact our dedicated team by calling 0333 220 3143, alternatively email mod@managers.org.uk or visit our website www.managers.org.uk/mod.



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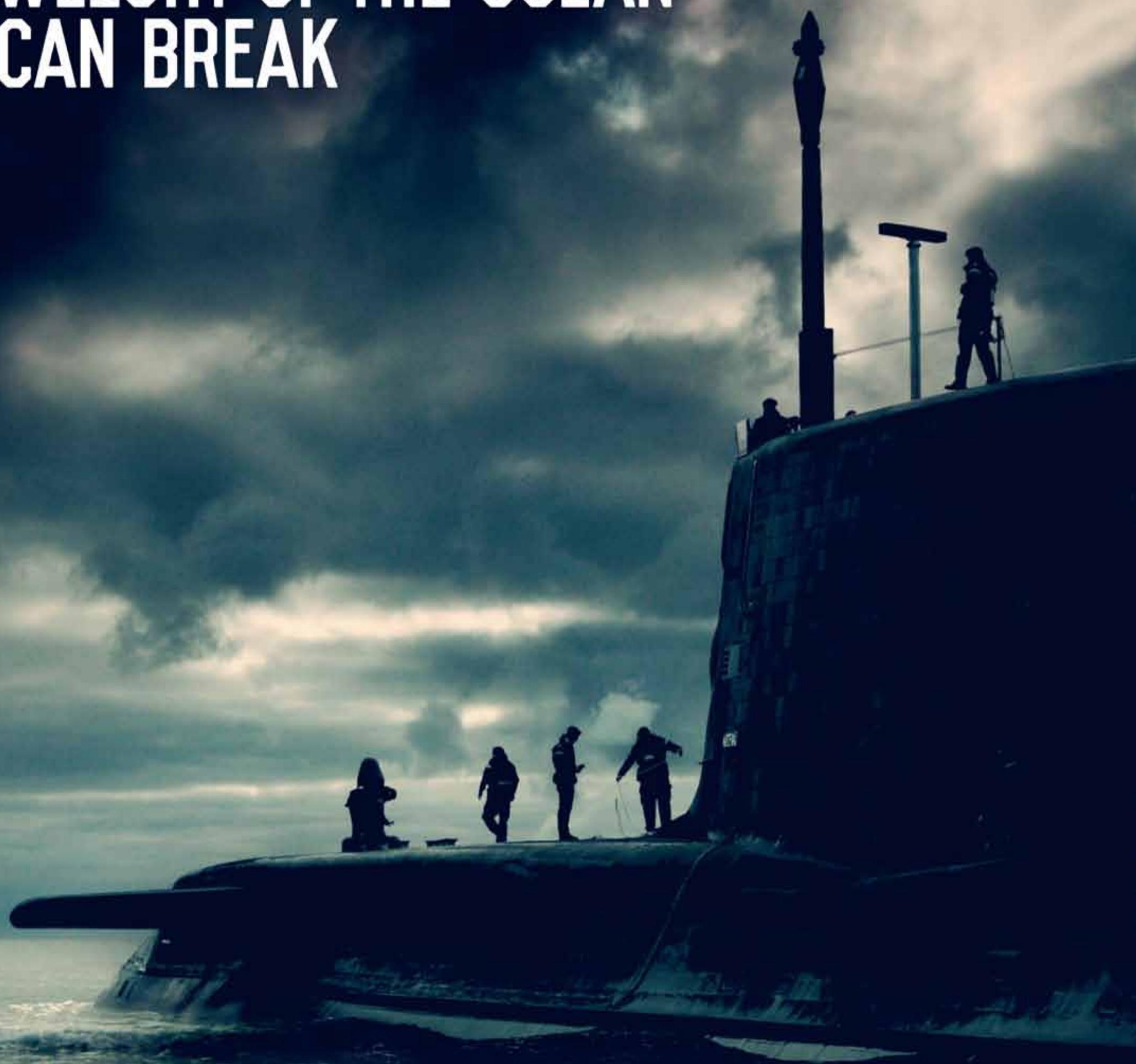
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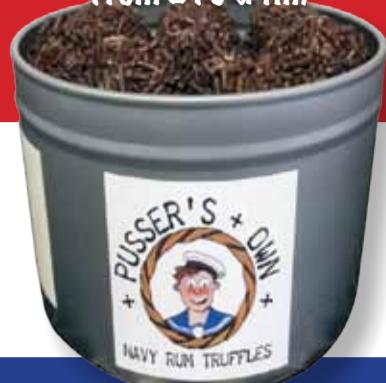
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Deaths

Capt Keith Leppard CBE RNVR. Joined the Y-scheme, which identified potential officers whilst still at school. Trained at HMS Daedalus and St Vincent, then flying training at RAF Sealand, Flintshire, in Tiger Moths. Completed flying training in Canada, awarded his wings in 1943. Selected as a fighter pilot in the Grumman Wildcat. His first deck-landing was made on HMS Ravager 1944. With 882 NAS he flew the Wildcat from Long Kesh then embarked in HMS Seacher. 1945 he took part in operations off Norway, including Operation Judgement, the strike on a U-boat base at Kilbton, then deployed to the Indian Ocean, Ceylon and VJ Day in Singapore. Promoted to lieutenant 1946 and appointed to 847 NAS flying Fairey Fireflies from HMS Glory in the Far East. 1963-65 Commander (Air) in Victorious; 1965-66 planning FAA officers' careers; 1967-69 Chief Staff Officer responsible for operations and training in the Far East and 1972-74 CO of RNAS Yeovilton. DPO(N) 1974, he retired 1977 and appointed CBE. July 28. Aged 91.

Surg Capt Robert J Morrow. RN Hospitals Haslar, Malta, Mauritius, HMS Drake, Tyne and Hermes. June 25. Aged 85.

Cdr Ian Inskip. After Dartmouth he qualified as a ship's diver in HMS Cambrian 1966 and retained this qualification throughout his 30-year Naval career, recording 30,000 minutes in his diving log. 1968 he became a submariner and served in Onslaught, Sealion, Odin and Onyx, becoming an astronavigation expert using hand-held and artificial horizon periscope sextants. Promoted Lt Cdr 1975 he reached 'dagger', the highest level of navigating expertise in the Navy, in 1979; appointed flotilla navigation officer in HMS Glamorgan 1980. Just after midnight June 11-12 1982 Glamorgan came under attack by an Exocet missile, and by turning his ship Inskip undoubtedly saved her from worse damage and was mentioned in dispatches. Promoted commander 1983, he served in key training, planning and security roles until 1997. He published *Ordeal by Exocet - HMS Glamorgan and the Falklands War 1982* (2002, reissued 2012) with profits donated to charities including Combat Stress, the Falklands Islands Memorial Chapel and the HMS Glamorgan memorial. Later RBL's county events officer and Poppy Appeal organizer for Perranporth, tripling cash raised. Member of ARNO. June 24. Aged 72.

Cdr Peter R Wippell. Specialised as an ordnance engineer and served in

HMS Vanguard, the Admiralty at Bath and HMS Fife before joining ASWE. He devised improvements to the Navy's missile systems that were used during the Falklands Conflict. A keen sportsman, a proficient flautist and played the bagpipes. June 2. Aged 85.

Lt Col Simon A N Gray. CTCRM, FPG Clyde, 30 and 42 Cdo, 18 UKSF SR, Risborough Barracks, Folkestone also Op Training and Advisory Group Warminster. July 11.

Lt Cdr Brian G Brockman. HMS Orion, Lysander, Tireen, Vernon (Royalist) and MOD Wreck Disposal Dept. July 17. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr Raymond J Davies RD RNR (Inst Lt RN). HMS Caledonia, Fisgard and S Wales Div RNR. July 9. Aged 85.

Lt Norman L Worskett. Served 1954-56 HMS Heron and HMS Ganges. March 13. Aged 84.

Lt Colin N Maitland RM. RM Eastney, ATURM, 45 Cdo, ITCRM and RN College Greenwich. July 4. Aged 76.

Lt Michael P Ramsbotham RNVR. Naval Intel Div. July 13. Aged 96.

Lt John D Sampson RNVR. HMS Goshawk. July 5. Aged 94.

Russell 'Russ' S Ireland RM A/Band C/Sgt. Served 1966-2001 at Condor, Cochrane, Raleigh, CTCRM, Heron, Alliance and Ambuscade. HMS Ganges Association July 16. Aged 69.

Mathew Cayton CR. Served HMS Howe, Veryan Bay, RNAS Stretton and HM Submarines Acheron and Tiptoe. HMS Bruce Association July 23. Aged 84.

Ronald J Norris PO. Served HMS Bruce, Virago, Chequers, Mariner, Berry Head, MMS 1762, Edderton, Kilderton, Upton and Keppel. Chairman of HMS Bruce Association for four years. February 26. Aged 84.

Leonard 'Len' Sturdy. Served HMS Kenya and Superb. Associate member of HMS Orion Association. May 14.

Ronald J Morham L/Sea. Served 1938-46 HMS Courageous, Furious and Friendship (Arctic Convoys). Aged 95.

Royal Naval Association

Ronald 'Ron' Simmond. Served HMS Bulawayo, HMS Jamaica Association and life member of Southend on Sea RNA. July 17. Aged 85.

Association of RN Officers/ RNOC

Vice Admiral Robert R Squires, FOSNI, FOSI, FOI, HMS Warspite, Hermione, Neptune, Bristol, Ajax, Eastbourne, Anson, Dreadnaught, Aegeas, Porpoise, Ambush and Dolphin. June 30. Aged 89.

Cdr R B 'Bob' Mortlock. FO Plymouth, CinC Iberland, MOD (DNW), HMS Eagle, Euryalus, Excellent, Diomedes, Alacrity, Wotton, Bermuda and Warrior. July 21. Aged 79.

Capt Ronald H Dadd RD* RNR. Solent

Division RNR. July 11. Aged 83.

Cdr Leslie J Stacey. HMS Rooke, Vernon, Collingwood, President, Ocean, Indefatigable and RN Eng College. July 6. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Paul Astle. HMS Dryad, Wasperon, Vernon, Lowestoft, Minerva, Bickington, Dumbarston Castle, British Forces Falkland Islands. July 22.

Lt Cdr Ronald H Hamblin. HMS Excellent, Nelson, Warrior, St Angelo, Phoenicia, Birmingham, Ark Royal, Tradewind, Drake, Untriring, Gambia, Fort, Tally Ho, Artemis and NATO. May 4. Aged 88.

Lt Cdr Frank Smith. HMS St Angelo, June 2. Aged 84.

Lt Cdr Brian G Brockman. HMS Orion, Lysander, Tireen, Vernon (Royalist) and MOD Wreck Disposal Dept. July 17. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr Raymond J Davies RD RNR (Inst Lt RN). HMS Caledonia, Fisgard and S Wales Div RNR. July 9. Aged 85.

Lt Norman L Worskett. Served 1954-56 HMS Heron and HMS Ganges. March 13. Aged 84.

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Capt Ronald H Dadd RD* RNR. Solent

Reunions

October 2016

Bay Class Frigates Association: Reunion, Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, Oct 17-19. All ex-Bay Class men and guests welcome. Contact Doug Turk at doug.turk@ntlworld.com, tel 01252 378629.

HMS Cheviot: Reunion at the Ingewood Hotel, Torquay, Oct 14-17. Contact Vic Denham at vic742008@hotmail.co.uk, tel 07949 955003.

May 2017

HMS Saintes Association: Reunion at the Aztec Hotel, Bristol May 5-8. All members, guests and former shipmates are sure of a warm welcome and great weekend. Contact Ron Miles on 01404 43177 or 38 Cypress Close, Honiton, Devon EX14 2YW.

Ask Jack

HMS Fisgard: I was a CPOGI in Fisgard from 1968 to 1971. I would like to make contact with an ex-Artificer Apprentice named K S Danes. He joined Fisgard in September 1968. I believe he went on to FAU but have no idea of his length of service. Contact Graham Hall on 01752 717678 or 07974 834914 if you can help.

Sports Lottery

July 9: £5,000 – Lt L Cambrook; £1,800 – WO2 S Garner; £800 – Surg Cdr M Terry; £600 – Cdr G Palin; £500 – LH P Carroll; £400 – CPO A McClelland.

July 16: £5,000 – Captn Thomas; £1,800 – LH B Goodlass; £800 – Cdr A Pierce; £600 – AB2 K Sayer; £500 – LH Z Smith; £400 – PO G Coulter.

July 23: £5,000 – WO1 J Todd; £1,800 – LH D Smith; £800 – Sub Lt L Webber; £600 – AB C Rouse; £500 – CPO P Townsend-Cardev; £400 – CPO J Kent.

July 30: £5,000 – AB1 S Atherton-Berry; £1,800 – Cpl J Seekins; £800 – Lt J Carver; £600 – LH S Hutchinson; £500 – AB2 D Ridgeway; £400 – Lt Cdr M Gee.

August 6: £5,000 – Lt Cdr P Maddison; £1,800 – Maj C McGhee; £800 – LH J Hague; £600 – AB G Flynn Carr; £500 – Capt D Wake; £400 – Surg Lt Cdr(D) A Westwood.

ONE of the winners at the recent Naval Education and Training Service (NETS) annual Elective Learning Awards was Yeovilton Fire Station – and helping them win that accolade was the base Learning and Development Centre (LDC).

As part of the NETS organisation, LDCs are vital in helping develop the intellectual potential of members of the Naval Service.

Not only does this help maximise operational capability – getting the best out of people for the benefit of the Service – but also helps individual for the time when they leave the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Maritime Reserves or RFA.

There are 17 LDCs into three geographical groupings:

NETS North – 45 Cdo and Clyde Naval Base;

NETS East – Portsmouth Naval Base Waterfront, HMS Nelson, HMS Collingwood, HMS Sultan and RM Poole;

NETS West – Yeovilton, 40 Cdo RM, RM Chivenor – CLR, CTCRM, BRNC, HMS Drake, RM Stonehouse, 42 Cdo RM, HMS Raleigh and Culdrose.

There are also two Joint Services Centres, at Northwood and Gibraltar.

LDCs have a series of objectives, requiring them to provide:

For further information see <http://defenceintranet.diffr.mil.uk/Organisations/Orgs/Navy/Organisations/Orgs/FOST/DFOST/Pages/EL3R.aspx>

Entries for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in October's Noticeboard must be received by **September 9**

President, Centurion, Glamorgan, Ulster, Afrikander, Hogue, Mermaid, RNEC Manadon, RNH Stonehouse and Bahama Defence Force. July 25.

Submariners Association

Patrick 'Ben' Lyons CPO Mech. Served 1967-77 in HM Submarines Trump, Walrus, Otter and Renown. North Staffs branch. July 29. Aged 78.

Ben Holmes LEM. Served 1959-63 in HM Submarines Explorer (60) and Narwhal (60-63). Medway Towns branch. July 3. Aged 82.

Don Hutchison PO Ck. Served 1953-59 in HM Submarines Artful, Anchorite,

Tudor, Acheron and Spiteful. Southampton branch. July 14. Aged 85.

Ted Neal LEM. Served 1938-49 in HM Submarines Sanguine, Taurus, Trespasser and Thermopylae. Blyth & Wansbeck branch. July 8. Aged 96.

Algerines Association

Kenneth J Richardson SM. Served 1950-53 in HMS Michael. June 20. Aged 86.

Lt William 'Bill' Fowler RNRV. Served 1943-46 in HMS Mutine and Mystic. June 27. Aged 95.

Ronald S Woodburn Sig. Served HMS Bramble 1955 also HMS Sheffield and Birmingham. July 23. Aged 80.

Did you serve at Jufair?

CAN you bring the pre and post-WW2 world of Royal Navy operations in the Gulf to life?

Senior RN officers in Bahrain want to show the long, proud history of the Royal Navy's first permanent base in the kingdom when its new HQ opens next year.

In various forms and guises (both as a ship or hulk and later as a base on shore) HMS Jufair was the hub of operations in the central Gulf region between 1935 and 1971 when Bahrain gained independence.

In the post 9/11 world, however, Bahrain once again assumed a key naval role as the centre of operations in the region by the US Navy (it's home to the Fifth Fleet), the RN (the UK Maritime Component Command), as well as the international Combined Maritime Forces (supported by more than two dozen of the world's navies).

UKMCC started life with fewer than ten staff. Having swelled to more than 100 personnel – and typically with ten warships, submarines and auxiliaries, plus elements of a couple of Fleet Air Arm squadrons in its charge at any one time (well over 1,000 men and women on an average day) – it outgrew its temporary headquarters, so the decision was taken to invest in a permanent base with offices, warehouses and support, accommodation, welfare facilities.

Some of the site at Mina Salman is already in use, the rest will be complete by next summer when it will be formally named and commissioned.

What staff at the headquarters lack are insights and photographs of life at the old Jufair; they want to create a timeline in the HQ building to remind personnel of the RN's long-standing commitment to Bahrain.

If you are able to help, send your accounts and scans of photographs – digital only please – to edit@navynews.co.uk and we'll pass them on to the UKMCC team.

Listen to Shep Woolley

PETTY Officer Gunnery Instructor Shep Woolley left his onboard life in the Royal Navy in December 1975 to follow a life on the boards of showbusiness.

Since then he has travelled the world with his songs and stories, but the RN has never been far away from his lifestyle.

He has raised funds for the RNRC, the RNBT, Pembroke House and Seafarers UK as well as other ship and association fundraisers.

To date he has produced five LP albums and seven CDs – with the latest having just been released.

Sailors on a Train, on Talking Elephant Records, contains a cross-section of material, from *Bound for Sunny Shotley* (a comical look at his first week in the RN) to a loud country-rock version of *Drunken Sailor*.

To buy a copy see the advertisement on p43 – the cost is £12 plus £2 p&p, but the first 100 orders are £10 inclusive of p&p.

Shep is offering his CDs in a *Navy News* competition – the first prize is a collection (*Life in a Blue Suit, Overboard, Grumpy Old Matelot* and *Sailors on a Train*) wrapped in a Grumpy Old Matelot T-shirt, while five runners-up will each receive a copy of *Sailors on a Train*.

To win, answer this question: at which training establishment did Shep join the Royal Navy?

Send your answer to edit@navynews.co.uk or Shep Woolley Competition, *Navy News*, Mail Point 1-4, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

Royal flight...



TWO Royal Marines soar over the French Alps as they represent the Naval Service at an international **paragliding** competition.

WO2 Nigel 'Bert' Lane, pictured in the foreground, and C/Sgt Grant Oseland, pictured in the background, were among 128 pilots from 17 countries who took to the skies at Laragne, around two hours south of Grenoble.

C/Sgt Oseland had an outstanding performance during the six days of flying at the 2016 Chabe Ozone Open Paragliding Competition to take second place overall.

He was among the third of pilots who managed to complete the 66.25km flight from Chabre to Chorges on the penultimate day of competition.

The duo also enjoyed the chance to fly with world paragliding cross country champion Honorin

Hamard, who also holds the world record for a flight over 300km.

The duo were able to compete in France thanks to funding from the RNRM Sports Lottery.

If you are interested in taking up paragliding and want to use the Joint Services Adventurous Training Scheme to get qualified in South Wales or the Bavarian Alps then please contact Lt Ali Andrews on 07575 280508.

The Joint Services Paragliding Centre will be running two paragliding foundation courses in Spain in November.

The courses are aimed at those working towards their Club Pilot as well as those who are newly qualified.

For more information log onto the Defence Intranet and search 'FDTC Crickhowell', 'JSPGC' or 'Paragliding'. Alternatively call 94354 3260 or 01874 810386.

Seahawk swoop to retain Navy title

HMS Seahawk secured the Navy **Cricket** Cup for the second year running.

The team from RNAS Culdrose faced stiff competition from their Fleet Air Arm rivals, HMS Heron at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth.

The men from RNAS Yeovilton elected to field first. The pitch looked to favour the batsmen and Seahawk's openers – PO Andy Bonnett (52) and AB Rob Milligan (82) – put on a partnership of 149 in 23 overs.

Milligan was eventually caught and was replaced by Sub Lt Leo Buscombe, who impressed with 61 runs.

CPO Andy Wilkinson (28) added insult to injury late in the innings with a couple of maximums in his 17-ball stay at the crease and Seahawk completed their 35 overs scoring 262-4.

The reply from Heron was tempered as they lost wickets regularly, mostly due to excellent bowling and fielding from the cup holders, only allowing one of the Heron batsmen into double figures (M Douglas 17).

Seahawk's captain PO Martin Greenwood was wicketless but impressive with only six runs coming off his five overs.

Sub Lt Buscombe (3 for 22), PO Dean Thomas (3 for 10) and PO Aircrewman Ed Butcher (3 for 7) all bowled excellent spells ensuring that the Navy Cup was heading back to the trophy cabinet in Cornwall, as Heron were bowled out for 59 in 26 overs completing a resounding 203-run victory.

AB Milligan was named man of the match.

Team manager CPO(ACMN) JJ Walker said: "This victory has been a crowning glory to my Royal Navy career. Myself and three other from the team are due to leave the Navy in the next few months and playing cricket on a winning side has been absolutely perfect."



Pictures: Keith Woodland

Showcase for RN talent

CRICKETERS from HMS Collingwood travelled to Gosport's Privett Park for a friendly fixture against the town's cricket team.

With Collingwood bowling and fielding first, the match started on a relaxed note, taking advantage of the summer sunshine.

Each batsman initially received the first ball for free and as the competition proceeded both teams made a confident attempt for the win.

One member of Collingwood's team, LPT Will Ballanger, said: "It's a great event with the aim of interacting with the local

sporting community and also showcasing some of the talent we have within Royal Navy cricket."

Collingwood's Phase 2 trainees ABs George Boulton and Jack Watson proved to be stars of the establishment's team, with their bowling talents consecutively dismissing the Gosport batsmen.

However the sailors' talents were unfortunately not enough as Gosport flawlessly bowled to victory.

With Gosport winning by 57 runs, the feelings of defeat soon faded as the teams enjoyed a home-cooked meal together.



Carl plays it cool in title contests

ROYAL Navy motorcycle rider CPO Carl Vickers is pictured in action as he competes for both the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Road Race Team and for Blackbird Corporate.

The Group Head in HMS Queen Elizabeth, CPO Vickers is this season focusing on the Inter-Service and Thundersport GB Championships, along with the North East Championships.

"It has been an honour to be part of the team and representing the Royal Navy," he said.

"On joining the team in 2015, all the members made me feel welcome and showed great support to myself as well as each other."

CPO Vickers, who was named best newcomer of the year last year, added: "I have been riding motorbikes on the roads for over 20 years and when I was given the opportunity by Blackbird Corporate to race their team bike I jumped at the chance.

"They were very supportive of me also racing their bike as part of the Royal Navy team."

"During my first season it was good to get advice and guidance from the more experienced road racing members of the team, such as Bill Callister, especially

following his great achievements at the Isle of Man TT.

"I was really pleased with my results during my first season racing and for 2016 I am focusing on gaining as many points as possible for the team to help towards retaining the championship title."

"For the North East Championships I am currently sitting third in the Pre-Injection Open Championships and fourth in the Pre-Injection 600 Championships."

"In the Thundersport Golden Era Supersport class I am currently sitting in 13th having only completed two full rounds out of six in 2016."

In 2015 the RNRMRRRT won the Inter-Service title and are currently fighting hard on the track to retain the title for 2016.

The current standings after four races have the Royal Navy Motorsports Team only 33 points behind the British Army Race Team.

With only two more rounds to go it looks like the championship is going to be close.

The next Inter-Service Championship round will be held at Donington Park on September 24 and 25.

Josh holds off USMC in Torbay race



● Mne Josh Davies (Hasler Coy) and Kyle King from USMC in Torbay

THE pride of the Royal Navy took on the might of the US Marine Corp in the **Torbay Half Marathon**.

The USMC have an impressive history in the event, boasting titles for the fastest male and female for the past three years, and they were not going to give this up without a fight as more than 1,600 competitors turned out to race.

From the start, two athletes created an impressive lead from the pack.

Mne Josh Davis (Hasler Coy) and Kyle King (USMC) were neck-and-neck in third place through the one-mile marker and remained so until the half-way stage.

As they passed eight miles, Davis stepped up his game and began to pull away to cross the finish line third overall and beat the USMC leading male by 1min 14sec.

USMC athletes took fifth, ninth, 11th, 13th and 66th places with the RN taking 17th, 20th, 24th and 31st spots.

The women's race was equally impressive, with AB Nicola Roder (Yeovilton) and Capt Christine Taranto (USMC) fighting for the top spot.

By the half-way stage Taranto was leading Roder by one minute, but as the race ended, it was clear that the training and dedication provided by the USMC had paid off, as Taranto

finished strongly, while Roder was visibly suffering.

Taranto finished in an impressive 34th (second overall female) and retained her grip of the fastest female between the nations, with Roder finishing 65th (fourth overall female).

Danielle Pozun (USMC) finished 87th and a debut from AB Stansfield (Neptune) proved strong, finishing in 146th (13th overall female).

Later in the year the teams will meet again across the pond in the Marine Corps' Marathon, held in Washington DC where the team representing the Royal Navy will be looking to add to its 24-14 victory ratio against the USMC.



● AB Nicola Roder



● The transition to cycling

Perfect day for triathlon

ATHLETES from the Fleet Air Arm gathered to compete at the second running of the RNAS Culdrose triathlon.

Organised by the air station's physical training department, the event, held to encourage people of all standards to compete, served as a showcase for all who are interested in taking up the gruelling sport.

Open not only service personnel who work on the base, a number of civilians also took up the challenge.

"We were surprised at the standard of some of the competitors," said LPT Dean 'Deano' Goulding.

"Today has been perfect for triathlon, not too warm, a slight breeze to keep people cool and, importantly for everyone, no rain."

Starting with a 300-metre swim in Culdrose's pool the competitors took full advantage of a warm afternoon before heading out onto their first transition in the gym car park followed by the seven-mile cycle route.

The final transition back at the gym saw the contestants swap cycle power for leg power as they set off on a final three-mile loop of runway 07-25.

"Most people found it a real novelty to run along the runways, which are normally completely out of bounds," continued 'Deano'.

The final placings were sorted between three categories; men under and over 35s and women.

Age isn't a barrier

A ROYAL Navy officer has beaten his personal best for a triathlon – at the age of 45.

Lt Steve Charles set his previous personal best time in 2006 and this year finally surpassed it at the Cotswold lakes – one of the flattest courses he could find.

The RNAS Culdrose-based officer said: "Training hard for this last attempt has been made so much more enjoyable by being based in Cornwall. Runs and cycles from my front door in Helston take me to some of the most beautiful spots I have ever trained."

"I made all my time up on the cycle phase and I owe a lot to the countless hills there seem to be around the Lizard peninsula."

"I felt confident of doing well, but five minutes faster is exceptionally pleasing."

Wearing his Royal Navy/Royal Marines Triathlon body suit, Steve enjoyed a great deal of public support.

"The many shouts of 'well done the Senior Service' and 'Go Navy' as I ran around the lake spurred me on to keep my pace up."

Medal haul for athletes at Inter-Services Reeks reaps reward



Flash lives up to name

A ROYAL Navy sailor from Plymouth nick-named Flash has scooped the title of the fastest man in the UK's Armed Forces.

LS Olusoji Fasuba, serving in the frigate HMS Somerset, won the 100-metre sprint title at the Inter-Services Athletics Championships (see right).

The athlete has a strong pedigree in track and field, remaining the African Record holder for 100m set at 9.85 seconds.

He said: "I was so glad that I could help the team put in such a good performance. My fellow Naval athletes are fantastic and always put in a lot of hard work on the track; it was great to have done so well."

Somerset's captain, Cdr Tim Berry said: "He is pure class, both professionally and on the track, Leading Logs Fasuba is not only the quickest man in all three Services, he is one of the quickest men in the world."

Although unable to commit to any training this year due to the ship being operational and at sea, his win in this year's 100m was an impressive performance. He also contributed to the Royal Navy 4x100m relay team victory in the key anchor role.



● C/Sgt Gaz Hurst and Cpl Adam Stokes



● NA Nicola Roder in the long jump and L/Cpl Adam Peacock in the men's 1,500m



Pictures: John Sambrooks

(RCDM Birmingham) took second place in the women's shot putt after leading until the final throw of the competition.

NA(SE) Nicola Roder (NAS Yeovilton) broke her own recently-set Royal Navy record for 5,000m by over three seconds in 18 mins 33.8 secs to finish fourth in a very high standard race.

The other women competing for the RN were: Sub Lt Lauren Woodcock (HMS Bulwark), AB Wtrs Henrietta Goodrum and Heather Kitcheman (HMNB Portsmouth), AB Tyler Dunnow (HMS Duncan) and AB SC Danielle Chapman (43 Cdo).

Not to be outdone, Mne Neal Russell (RAF Kinloss) also showed team spirit of the highest order with a 150m jog on completion of the men's 5,000m to make the starting line for the 3,000m steeplechase.

The Inter-Services finished with the Royal Navy in third place, but it was a close-run event with the other two Armed Forces.

NA(AH) Dale Willis (400m) and L/Cpl Peacock (mile) were joined by LET(ME) Daryn Jackson (HMS Ocean) (100m), to represent the UK Armed Forces at the combined Inter Counties/

runners. Fortunately, it's also the shortest leg at a mere 6.5 miles. They would also get a 15-minute head start on their equine competitors.

The race began to the blast of a shotgun and immediately into the lead was Capt Kidson.

Waiting at the first changeover point alongside myself was Capt Hurst, and a most unwelcome swarm of hungry midges.

Having taken cover in the coaches, shouts of 'runners' coaxed us off to see who led. In the lead were two individual athletes, closely followed by the first relay runner, a rival from Bristol's Westbury Harriers.

An anxious wait ensued for the appearance of Royal Marines A & B and after what seemed like an eternity, Capt Kidson lurched

into view, with a narrow lead over Mne Dalton.

I handed over to C/Sgt Belcher a good five minutes before Capt Hurst handed over to C/Sgt Munro.

C/Sgt Belcher had winners' medals around his neck before the RM A team finished in second place with Westbury Harriers in third.

Prizes were awarded by GB Olympic marathon runner Liz Yelling who also ran the entire 21 miles.

Anyone interested in representing the Royal Marines Running Association should contact Cpl Stokes, RMRA Secretary. Email: adam.stokes426@mod.uk, tel (mil) 93780 4251, tel (civ) 01823 362251. Alternatively check out the RNRN Running group page on Facebook.

Marines take racing honours against horses

ROYAL Marines were victorious in the annual **Whole Earth Man v Horse** race over 21 miles of Welsh countryside, writes Cpl Adam Stokes.

Leading the RM B team was C/Sgt Pete Belcher, in his third such race, with Mne Rich Dalton and myself. The RM A team consisted of Capt Adam Kidson, Capt Gaz Hurst and C/Sgt Gaz Munro.

Capt Kidson and Mne Dalton completed the first leg, handing over to C/Sgt Munro and me respectively, who were charged with completing the longest leg of eight miles.

What quickly becomes apparent to a first timer like myself as the coach continued ever upwards into the mountains, is just how much height the first leg runners must gain before handing over to the second leg

runners. Fortunately, it's also the shortest leg at a mere 6.5 miles. They would also get a 15-minute head start on their equine competitors.

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Mine's bigger than yours...

THE head coaches from both Royal Navy Rugby Union and Royal Navy Rugby League celebrate both codes winning their Inter-Service championships.

CPO Ash Coates, left, proudly holds the union trophy while POPT Steve Lockton has hold of the league trophy in front of HMS Victory.

The RNRL Seniors took the championship following a 29-29 draw with the Army at Twickenham, having previously beaten the RAF. The RNRL Seniors beat the Army 10-2 to retain the Jack Harrison Trophy and Inter-Service Cup.

RNRL President RAdm Alex Burton said: "What a great time for Navy rugby – to be Inter-Service champions across both codes at the same time is a phenomenal achievement and long may it continue."

"We are hoping for a repeat performance in September. I appreciate it is not immediately on the Union radar but I wish them all the best for next season."

Full details of the RNRL's new campaign can be found at: <http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/royalnavyrugbyleague>

For more information on RNRL visit: <http://www.navyrugbyunion.co.uk/>



Seven up as MCM2 join expert sides

APACHE Braves. Oxfam Crusaders. Olaf's Axes. 2nd Mine Countermeasures Squadron.

Yes, you read that correctly. A squad of nine Royal Navy personnel competed in a tournament featuring specialist rugby sevens teams at Slough RFC.

The MCM2 side competed in the 'Beer Competition', losing their first match 27-14 against a well-drilled side from Reeds Weybridge RFC. Chris Brettell ran in two tries for the squadron.

The second match was a much more entertaining affair, with MCM2 dominating the York Millionaires (a group of university friends) and scoring six tries, three of them credited to Danny Lynch.

Having had a taste of victory, the MCM2 were soundly beaten 24-14 in their final match by eventual group winners the Green Dragons from High Wycombe.

While the tournament ended early for MCM2, the players moved pitchside to watch the Royal Navy Sharks compete in the Elite Competition.

MCM2 7s team actively support the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and wear their logo on the playing shirt in order to raise awareness for the charity and all the Service families they have helped.

MCM2 squad: Ben Allen, Chris Brettell, Danny Lynch, Dale Partington, James Marsh, Christian Chess, Samuel Turner, Alex Macaulay, and Jake Lunden.

Words: Ben Allen



● Above: Danny Lynch – supported by Alex Macaulay – finds the gaps against the Millionaires. He scored three of the MCM2's six tries in the match.
● Right: The MCM2 rugby sevens squad

Pictures: Alligin Photography, John Walton



Marines down Paras to keep trophy

THE Royal Marines emerged triumphant to retain the Trafalgar Cup after beating the Paras Rugby League side 26-10 at Taunton RFC.

Ref Mickey Brighton got the game under way with the RM playing into the strong breeze and sun for the first half.

The early exchanges were as to be expected, with plenty of physicality and some good play thrown in for good measure.

The deadlock lasted for 15 minutes before the first score was posted; the RM had come close, especially out on their right, but it was prop Tom Jones who broke the Paras' defence to go over to the right of the posts. Scrum half Rich Cadywould knocked over the conversion to make it 6-0.

A great break early in the second half saw the RM mount the first meaningful attack and a kick through by Cadywould bounced close to the Paras' line but it was RM sub-

Wilson Curtis who beat the Paras' defence to steal the ball and touch down to put his side in to a 10-0 lead.

The Paras struck back quickly though, with half back Ben O'Connell crossing to get his side on the scoreboard and make it 10-4.

Two tries in ten minutes stretched the Royals' lead. John Barnett was next on the scoreboard but Cadywould's kick was wide. The next score to the Royal Marines was one of the best of the game; an inch-perfect pass in midfield by Cadywould found full back Mel Gilmour who sliced through the opposition defence to give his scrum half a straightforward conversion, making it 20-4.

The Paras were rewarded with their second try but it was the Royals who sealed the match, with Scott Mills making a great break before pushing the ball out to second row Luke Davies who took his chance well, scooting behind the posts to touch down

in spectacular fashion. Richard Cadywould struck home his third conversion.

The victory capped a great two years for the RMRL, who began this season with 45 Commando winning the Wigan Bowl Corps Championships before a tour of Sydney in Australia.

The RM squad, a mix of experience and novices, played three matches; the Australian Police (lost 68-0), the New South Wales Fire Service (lost 46-10) and the Royal Australian Navy – a match the RM lost 14-10 but which produced a performance reflecting the newfound maturity and confidence of the RMRL squad.

The RMRL kick-started its season with the now-traditional memorial match versus Wigan St Pats, winning 22-16. Unfortunately, due to player availability, the Corps had to cancel fixtures versus the Royal Artillery and the Royal Navy Sailors side.

Third Olympic gold for Navy officer

ROYAL Navy rowing supremo Lt Pete Reed scooped his third Olympic gold as Great Britain's men's eight reclaimed their title in Rio for the first time since 2000.

Reed, 33, who won titles in Beijing and London in the men's four, said: "I can't put it into words. We've never been so ready. They're an amazing bunch of guys, that was a big, big race."

Britain, the world champions, dominated the race and finished ahead of Germany and the Netherlands.

Reed joined the RN as an engineering officer cadet in 1999 and it was during a fitness test in the Gulf on his first deployment in HMS Exeter that he discovered his potential for rowing while using the Concept 2 machine. He posted the fastest time in the Royal Navy's annual Fleet-wide fitness competition.

In 2004 he won a place at the University of Oxford for a two year MSc course in engineering, during which time he trained

with the Oxford University Boat Club and competed in the annual boat race against Cambridge in 2004 and 2005.

The 6ft 6in rower was selected for the GB coxless four team in 2005 following the retirement of Matthew Pinsent and James Cracknell.

Unbeaten for 27 consecutive races until Lucerne 2007, the British four won gold at all three World Cups in 2005 and 2006, and finished both seasons by becoming World Champions.

Reed continued his training to represent Great Britain at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing and the Coxless Four took gold in a nailbiting final, beating the Australian four by 1.28 seconds.

Reed was due to return to full-time Royal Navy duties after Beijing but revealed he had been given permission to continue training for London 2012 where, along with Andrew Triggs-Hodge, Tom James and Alex Gregory, helped GB retain the gold in the men's coxless four.



● RN rowers, from left, Lt Jim Thomson, Lt Cdr Jim Hyde, Lt Callum Fraser and Cdr Derek Powles in action in the City Regatta

Rowers pull crowds for the City Regatta

ROYAL Navy indoor rowing teams took part in City Regatta events in Bristol and London.

Teams of four rowed a total of 4,000 metres against four other teams, with the first two going to a semi-final race to decide who would make the final.

Cdr Derek Powles (DES, Bristol), Lt Cdr Jim Thomson (NCHQ), Lt Cdr Jim Hyde (HMS Northumberland) and Lt Callum Fraser (HMS Vanguard) rowed to the Bristol final where they were narrowly beaten by a mere 0.9sec.

Lt Fraser was rewarded for his Royal Navy debut with selection for a 500m sprint final, taking second place in a time of 1min 26.7sec.

Large crowds gathered for the second event in Canary Wharf to see two Royal Navy men's teams and NA(SE) Abby Aldridge (HMS Queen Elizabeth) join seasoned rowers in a combined women's team.

Lt Cdr Thomson and Lt Fraser were joined by CPO Collin Leiba (HMS Drake) and PO Matt Parkinson (HMS Collingwood) in team one.

CPO Tim Cox (Collingwood), AB Tom Walker (HMS Argyll), Sgt Sam Arnold (CTCRM) and affiliate Ed Warr (RNNDP) made up team two.

Team one won their heat in 3min 8sec to make the semi-final, where they finished a close second to Warwick Boat Club.

Royal Navy team two rowed an excellent heat in 3min 12sec. The 500m sprint finale saw Lt Cdr Thomson finish second for team one in 1min 20.9 secs, with AB Walker representing team two and finishing sixth in 1min 23.8 secs.

The Navy indoor rowers move on to structured training regimes as they approach the racing season. Anyone interested in the sport should contact their local PT staff.

Golden days for gliding

PAST and present members of Seahawk Gliding Club gathered to celebrate 50 years of Navy gliding at RNAS Culdrose.

The club has seen many types of glider and tug aircraft come and go leading to today's fleet comprising of a Puchacz glider which is the work-horse of the club, the Inter-Service winning DG505 as well as the Junior Basic and Pegase machines.

Individual achievements include John Smith's Inter-Service win, George Kosak's out and return 300km 'Diamond Goal' and Ian Reid's 300km 'Gold distance' out from Culdrose; still the only two 300km flights from the base.

In 2015 Jordan Richard

achieved fourth place in the British Gliding Association (BGA) junior nationals and has been selected for the 2017 junior squad.

■ A team from RFA Argus took advantage of a break in their programme to experience the thrill of gliding at Culdrose.

Travelling from their home port at Falmouth, where the Royal Navy's aviation training ship has completed a period alongside, six crew members were invited by HMS Seahawk Gliding Club to an afternoon of soaring over the Lizard Peninsula.

"I wish I'd done this years ago now," said 2nd Officer James Challinor. "It's something I can scrub off my bucket list now."



● Main image: Mne Daniel Bennett; Top, CPO Mac McCormick; Second row, OC Alison Barrett and AB Adam Starovla New; Above, CPO Aaron Wilding and PO Ben Wright; Left, Lt Jamie Weller



● The triumphant Royal Navy Gymnastics Team

Pictures: DE Photo

We are the champions

Navy gymnasts scoop coveted national title

TWO national team titles, five individual titles and six medals – Royal Navy gymnasts ensured they were the most successful team at a national competition.

Every member of the team ranked in the top six of their disciplines at the British Gymnastics Veterans' competition held at Lilleshall National Sports Centre in Shropshire.

The biggest competition to date saw more than 300 gymnasts from across the country compete in a number of disciplines.

The Royal Navy fielded teams in the trampoline, tumbling and men's team events – taking the National Champions title in the tumbling category.

Lt Jamie Weller picked up a bronze medal in the male pro tumbling

category, while the male novice contest saw CPO Aaron Wilding take gold and Mne Daniel Bennett silver.

OC Alison Barrett picked up a silver medal in the female novice category to help the Royal Navy beat six other teams to the top spot.

But it was the Artistic National Team Championship title that the Royal Navy Gymnastics Association had as their main target – with two Chief Petty Officers going neck-and-neck in the male novice over-30 category.

CPO Keith 'Mac' McCormick posted the highest score on the rings but was pipped to gold by CPO Wilding.

Mne Bennett finished sixth in the same category, while Lt Weller took gold in the male pro over-30 category for performing the hardest floor and vault routines of the entire competition.

The squad was helped to the team title by POET(WE) Ben Wright, who won the pommel discipline to finish in fourth place in the male novice over-18 category.

"It felt amazing when we won the best team, waiting during the medal ceremony in anticipation and then the moment they announced the winners of the 2016 men's artistic was the Royal Navy," said CPO Wilding. "All the hard work and effort that everyone put in finally paid off."

AB Adam Starovla New scooped silver in the male over-18 pro trampolining contest with the highest tariffed routine of the entire competition – four double somersaults connected.

Lt Weller took gold and Mne Bennett bronze in the male over-30 trampolining event, while OC Barrett took gold in

the female novice over-18. AB Stacey Liggett finished in fifth place in the female novice over-30 category.

The Royal Navy team narrowly missed out on a bronze medal, finishing fourth out of nine teams.

The veterans' contest is open to gymnasts aged over 18 who have not competed at international level for two years.

The Royal Navy Gymnastics Association was only formed last year and members took part in a number of regional competitions before the national championships.

Lt Weller said: "This is my fourth year competing at the British Vets and every year the standard of gymnastics goes up. Being here with the Royal Navy team was something I had been dreaming about since I joined the Navy, let alone

winning two team national titles."

POET(WE) Wright added: "I am so proud of what myself and the team has achieved, considering we are a new team and a lot of the team members only started training seriously last year."

"We have already started discussing our plan for next year's competition. Plus we were definitely the best looking team there!"

The medals were presented by former world tumbling champion Kristof Willerton.

The Royal Navy Gymnastics Association, which has training venues across the country, is open to males, females, regulars and reservists in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Anyone wishing to join should visit the [Royal Navy Gymnastics](#) Facebook page.